

This book, *Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality: the Case of Cameroun*, is a valuable document in reflecting on quality education improvement in Sub-Saharan Africa which continues to face vast challenges in terms of access to quality education. This book shows that the leadership style of school principals is playing a very influential role. Based on qualitative research, school leadership in Cameroon focuses mostly on administrative routines rather than on instructional leadership and quality of teaching. Meanwhile, evidence-based results show that pedagogical (also known as instructional) leadership style is contributing to quality improvement by focusing on teaching quality and learner achievement. This is shown through a qualitative design that was used, incorporating an intervention and then conducting a research on the leadership perceptions of secondary school principals. The book concludes, by reflecting on how to bring about change. It reaches the conclusion that leadership training workshops for school principals and teacher in-service training matter greatly for the improvement of education.



Frederick Fondzenyuy Njobati holds a master degree in educational quality (MA) obtained at the University of Bamberg. He followed many professional trainings including in-service teacher education and in learner-centred and active pedagogy; he attended a professional development program in Israel on innovative methods for an integrated approach in teacher training with support from UNESCO. He is currently the Coordinator of the Pedagogic In-Service Training Programme, ISTP of Protestant Churches, Cameroon (PCC and CBC). He pursues a doctoral program and is a team member of the coordination of the International Master Programme in Educational Quality (IMPEQ) at the Chair of Foundations in Education, University of Bamberg.



Njobati, F. F.

Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality



Brot
für die Welt

New Perspectives on Quality Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited by Christine Nyiramana, Susanne Röss, Tharcisse Gatwa,
Susanne Krogull, Annette Scheunpflug, and Penine Uwimbabazi

Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality: The Case of Cameroon

Frederick Fondzenyuy Njobati

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Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality

New Perspectives on Quality Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Over recent decades, national and international policy actors together with teachers, parents, community leaders, and faith-based organizations have made great progress in providing access to education. Today around the world, more children are in school than ever before. Yet being in school is not enough. Already efforts to expand access to schooling require even more exceptional efforts to ensure the quality of education students receive once they are in school. This series presents new findings on competence-based teaching, learner-centered pedagogies, critical thinking skills, and socially responsive approaches to learning in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa. The authors in this series have conducted their research in the context of the *International Master Program of Educational Quality in Developing Countries* (IMPEQ) at the University of Bamberg in partnership with the Protestant University of Rwanda (PUR), the Free University of the Great Lake Region (ULPGL) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Evangelical University of Cameroon. The research was made possible through the funding from Bread for the World. The monographs in this series highlight the importance of continuous teacher education and, most importantly, the centrality of efficient leadership for fostering educational policies and practices to meet the needs of all students.

*For my mother, Bridget Biy Winkar (1949 – 2005)
and father, Njobati Raphael Kwala*

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Frederick Fondzenyuy Njobati



Brot
für die Welt



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Butare-Huye

Email: fathebu@yahoo.fr

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ABBREVIATIONS

CBC:	Cameroon Baptist Convention
DED:	German Development Service
EFA:	Education For All
EZE:	Protestant Association for Development
IMPEQ:	International Master Program in Educational Quality
ISTP:	Pedagogic In-Service Training Program
NWR:	North West Region
OECD:	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCC:	Presbyterian Church in Cameroon
PUR:	Protestant University of Rwanda
UEC:	Université Evangélique du Cameroun
ULPGL:	Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

Beyond the fact that the completion of compulsory education has substantially improved over the past twenty years, achieving educational quality for all continues to be a major challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa where many children do not reach basic skills in reading and numeracy by the end of primary school (UNESCO, 2014). A focus on quality education is thus paramount to improve the overall performance of educational systems and to support students' academic achievement. High quality education requires high quality research that combines sophisticated knowledge of educational theories, adequate research methods, and contextualizing sensibilities for local realities as they intersect with global political, economic, social, and historical forces. Every educational dimension imaginable – school access, didactics and pedagogical approaches, academic content and competences – if approached with such a notion of high quality research presents itself as a challenge that poses many questions and few certain answers. To nonetheless forge pathways towards much needed answers requires a sturdy intellect, diligence, creativity, and a supportive community of scholars engaged in critical feedback. Monographs in this series carefully investigate educational concepts and theories as they pertain to quality education in Sub-Saharan Africa. They cover many topics ranging from leadership skills, competence-based and learner-centered pedagogies, cognitive activation, critical thinking skills, and socially responsive and inclusive approaches to teaching. The monographs go beyond theory in that they reflect on the practical implications of the research findings. The authors provide in-depth analyses grounded in a deep knowledge of and experiences in the context in which the research was

conducted. They articulate recommendations that touch on the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of schooling. In this way, the series provides a collective space for emerging African scholars to discuss their research on education to impart lessons for mastering 21st century challenges in education everywhere.

With *Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality*, Frederick Njobati targets the relationship between school principals' leadership style and the educational quality, a topic that is central to understanding and improving the quality of education around the world. The research is situated in the context of the North West Anglophone region of Cameroon. Based on the the review of literature, instructional leadership style is described as the leadership style most conducive to quality education. Mr. Njobati develops his research questions concerning the principals' experiences in leadership style and the challenges they face in exercising their leadership responsibilities. Following an in-depth reflection on the choice of method and sample, Mr. Njobati describes the procedure: An intervention followed by a qualitative study. He shows a profound understanding of data collection and analysis. Mr. Njobati concludes with a series of policy implication as well as suggestions for further research. Expanding principals' opportunities for professional development and the sharing of best practices principals paired with a policy agenda that prioritizes quality of education are at the core of Mr. Njobati's recommendations. Nonetheless, he sees the need for further research to better understand how societal norms and other systemic factors contribute to leadership styles and preferences.

Mr. Njobati presents the scientific community of school quality with an excellent study that has been well written and clearly articulated. The book is a must read for every scholar and practitioner working in contexts with insufficient teacher and principal training infrastructure since it also provides a detailed plan on training sessions concerning school leadership.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The present study is framed on the topic, "Impact of the leadership styles of principals on school quality – the case of lay private secondary schools in the North West Anglophone region of Cameroon". A qualitative design was used, incorporating an intervention and then conducting a research that deepened on the leadership perceptions of secondary school principals. This research was characterized by the reflection on how to bring about change. It was conducted within the master study period at the University of Bamberg from October 2013 to August 2015.

The experience from carrying out the study was both enriching and engaging. For the unmeasurable sense of motivation, inspiration in science and support which has paved my way into research, I am specially thankful to my supervisor and head of the IMPEQ program, Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug. My sincere thanks go to Dr. Susanne Krogull for her steady mentoring and constructive feedback.

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This work could not have been possible without the support from my family. I herewith express my sincere thanks to the entire Njobati family.

I hope the readers will find this study resourceful to contribute to improving educational quality in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Frederick Fondzenyuy, Njobati

Bamberg, October 2019

1

INTRODUCTION

This study examines school leadership in relation to education quality. It seeks to respond to the question of the leadership experiences of school principals and the challenges they face. The case of school leadership in lay private secondary schools of the Anglophone North West Region of Cameroon is analyzed and forms the basis of the study. This work articulates on associating leadership style to students' learning outcomes.

1.1 Context and problem

The stride to attain education for all is the pre-occupation of the international community, an aspect that is considered a fundamental human right and a major contributing factor to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2000). Sub-Saharan Africa being one of the sub-regions in the world with the lowest level of attaining 'Education for All' goals, and more importantly, the provision of quality education, is a cause for concern (UNESCO, 2012; Lange, 2014). This study on school leadership is anchored on Cameroon, a country in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Cameroon educational system is differentiated under two parallel dimensions, namely the cultural and administrative.

1.1.1 The cultural differentiation

From the cultural context, Cameroon runs two sub-systems of education: the Anglophone and Francophone sub-systems. This bicultural pattern is rooted in the colonial history of the country (Su, 2001). The Francophone part of Cameroon whose former colonial ruler is France gained independence in 1960 and is comprised of 8 regions out of the ten for the whole country. On the other hand, the Anglophone part had Great Britain as former colonial ruler and had independence in 1961 and is made up of 2 regions, namely the North West and South West Regions. The Anglophone part is geographically and numerically in the minority (Konings & Nyamjoh, 1997) and it is in the Anglophone North West Region that this study is conducted.

Education in Cameroon in general and school leadership reflects the evolutionary stages of education in the country, ranging from the pioneer works of missionary bodies that opened the first schools, through the colonial powers to the post-colonial situation (Su, 2001). Formal education in Cameroon was started by Protestant Missionaries namely the English Baptist Missionary Society and the Basel Missionary Society in 1843 and 1886 respectively. Both missionary groups had as motive to spread the Christian religion, introduce literally education, to enable the indigenes read and interpret the bible by themselves (Fanso, 1989). The use of the mother tongues alongside colonial language was enforced. In these missionary schools, discipline, moral and ethical values were promoted. The culture and daily life realities were integrated into the content and teaching shared between missionaries and the local persons. On the whole leadership in schools

founded by missionaries was shared and decentralized (Jones, 1922). Although the different colonial powers that annexed Cameroon, namely the Germans, followed by the English and the French in some aspects had common characteristics in their leadership and educational policies such as exercising authoritarian leadership and high use of corporal punishment, it is argued that the Germans on the other hand had a liberal policy to education, fully accepting the teaching of Christian religion in schools and integrating the indigenous languages (Su, 2001). Here, I observe that an implicit normativity of German education policy was that the state had to adequately support education whether non-state (missionary) or state.

After the First World War, German Cameroon was partitioned between Britain and France in 1919 with the two partitions known respectively as Anglophone and Francophone parts of Cameroon. The educational system in Cameroon after independence in 1961 till date continued to reflect this bicultural pattern though with persistent attempts of assimilation by the Francophone sub-system (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). In the Anglophone part of Cameroon, the British in their policy developed the use of indirect rule, decentralization, collaboration and the recognition of the traditional institutions and their authority, which characterize school leadership from the Anglophone perspective (Su, 2001). The British colonial system allowed the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, promoted mass education and voluntary efforts, made education liberal assisting the financing of private education. On the other hand, the French colonial system of education had the implicit normativity of making Cameroonians Frenchmen. Historians hold a strong conviction that the French government was not interested

in the freedom and independence of the colonized people (Nghoh, 2004). Under the French colonial rule, leadership was centralized and hierarchical; largely under government control, making French the only language of instruction. This system of education promoted white-collar jobs and discriminated against religious and other private schools, a situation described by Su (2001) as injustice in allocating education possibilities.

From the historical background, the Anglophones and Francophones in Cameroon have developed differently with two different educational systems. The bicultural status of the education system in Cameroon is only a window dressing, as it is not fully respected; rather, the assimilation policy by the francophone majority is being forced onto Anglophones (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). The liberal nature of Anglophone system is being thwarted. Financial support to private education through subsidies is very small and payments irregular (Lange, 2014). I observe that overall the Government of Cameroon clearly discriminates against the Anglophone education policy and against private schools. For instance, between 1983 and 1991, the state had tried severally to abolish the Anglophone system of education and its form of examinations but the nationwide petition and civil strife from Anglophone students and the Anglophone community made some of the reforms to be withdrawn (Nghoh, 2004). The bicultural system of education in Cameroon is further made more complex as there are about 250 indigenous languages spoken (Aghah, 2014) in addition to French and English, which are the two official languages. The situation is further aggravated as Cameroon is mainly a party presidential state (Sarah, 2014). This allegation is supported with the descriptive characteristic of the Cameroon system of government as

being autocratic and corrupt although it is positively called 'Africa in miniature' (Nyamnjoh, 1999).

1.1.2 The administrative differentiation

From the administrative dimension, education in Cameroon is structured under two platforms, namely: public schools and private schools. In the Cameroon context, public schools are schools created, owned and managed by the government while private schools are non-state schools owned and managed by a community, religious or denominational body or by private individuals. Private schools in Cameroon function in two independent administrative structures namely, confessional private schools (managed by religious bodies) and lay private schools (managed by private individuals). The sample of my study is on lay private secondary schools. In most countries, the education of children and concerns for educational improvement is borne by both the public and private sector. Although the specificities vary from country to country, overall, private schools select their students and are funded in whole or partly by the tuition fees charged on students (Coleman et al., 1981, Hoxby, 1994). Most private schools are developed to compliment insufficient provision of public education (McEwan et al., 2000). Many lay private secondary schools in Cameroon were created to respond to the high demand for education by parents.

There is very little government subvention to support the running of these private schools. In Cameroon, teachers recruited to manage and teach in lay private secondary schools have very low salaries compared to those of public schools. Most of them do not have professional teacher training and most students who register in these schools

come from poor backgrounds and are mostly those who could not fulfill the admission conditions in government schools or are dropouts from other schools. The lay private schools in this context are therefore not elite's schools that enroll students perceived to be academically strong and or coming from parents with an economically viable background (Clark & Del Bono, 2014). The focus of my study is on lay private schools in the Anglophone sub-system of education in the North West Region of Cameroon. These schools under study have a public-school character as they are opened to children of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Details will be discussed in chapter four.

The mixed and unclear educational system in Cameroon today as highlighted above brings about challenges of school leadership especially leadership in Anglophone schools. In my opinion, the existing beliefs in school leadership by Principals of schools in Cameroon today are connected to different historical foundations, the Anglophone / Francophone divide and the administrative structure put in place. Although the Cameroon law number 98/004 of 1998, *To lay down guidelines for education in Cameroon*, in section 15 stresses that the educational system must be organized in two sub-systems; the English-speaking sub-system and the French-speaking sub-system thereby respecting the national option for bi-culturalism and section 24, making provision for private education to assist the state in the task of education (Tchombe, 2014, Tamukong, 2004), I observe that the implementation is almost absent.

From my experiences of working with schools and school principals at various levels, I use this platform to share

the experiences and challenges got during school visits, lesson observations, conduction of training workshops and discussions with principals and deductions from analyzing the situation. Overall and based on my observations, the underlying problem in this study is that most Principals of schools in Cameroon do not reflect on the implication their leadership style has on school quality. Each principal adopts his or her own leadership style, mainly a mix that is dominated by administrative or managerial leadership. The slant of this work is on the case of lay private secondary schools of the North West Anglophone Region of Cameroon. From my pre-existing knowledge, I observe that, private schools have challenges in leadership to deal with the students of varied academic and social backgrounds in order to achieve students' success; thus, the leadership style adopted by a school principal plays an important role. No doubt, researchers hold the view that the impact of leadership tends to be greatest in schools where the learning needs of students are most acute (Leithwood et al., 2004). This problem also has roots at the systemic level where there are inadequate guidelines and limited policies on school leadership.

From the problem description above, there is the need to improve on school leadership and contribute to quality teaching and students' achievements. My topic and sample, though small as I am working only with a few principals of the North West Region of Cameroon, is contributing to address the situation of Cameroon and sub-Saharan Africa in general and thus the global agenda of education quality improvement.

The daily life practice of school leadership by secondary school principals in Cameroon in general focuses more

on administrative and top down approach that is typical of teacher-centered education. On the other hand, learner-centered education characterized by improving social competences and self-esteem of learners, is primordial for school quality improvement (Krogull et al., 2014). This calls for a paradigm shift in school leadership style. More specifically, most principals of lay private secondary schools in Cameroon have not had any professional training either as teachers or as school leaders. Findings show that effective schools need leadership that is trained; is able to sustain innovations that bring about increased students' achievement and with an attitude of sharing best practices to ensure systemic change (Fullan, 2010). It is therefore evident from this background that carrying out an intervention and reflection on school leadership is essential.

Major school reforms in the United States of America are focused on improving teaching and learning with the ultimate goal of developing competences in learners (Leithwood et al., 2004). Such reforms are much needed for Sub-Saharan Africa. To meet this goal, there is high expectation on school leadership that is able to adequately improve and monitor teaching and learning quality (Clifford, 2012). Supporting argument lays emphasis on school leadership that improves on the development of adequate competences of students for life, a slant on learning outcome which calls for a purposeful redefinition of school leadership responsibilities (OECD, 2009). Given that education quality articulates on learning outcome, it is evident that school leadership has connectivity to the school quality and should focus more on improving teaching and learning (OECD, 2008). There is therefore strong evidence that improving school leadership can improve

school outcomes (OECD, 2009). While acknowledging that teaching quality is the key factor in the building of competences in learners, other scholars still argue that the school principal has an enormous responsibility to ensure teacher success and the desired learning outcomes (Duze, 2012). In the light of global challenges and the rapidly changing context of schools, it is inevitable to reflect on the improvement of school leadership and in which direction it takes. Although most research emphasize that after teaching quality, school leadership quality, is the most significant school-related contributor to what and how much students learn at school (Clifford, 2012; Leithwood et al., 2004) other scholars further defend the argument by explaining that school leadership can improve school outcomes by influencing the motivation and capacities of teachers, the school climate and environment (Hattie, 2012). It is evident from the afore-mentioned arguments that effective school leadership is essential as it brings together all other factors of school quality for better learning outcomes (DeVita et al., 2007). A more detailed study reveals that, an instructional leadership factor will influence teachers' beliefs and commitments positively in the direction of students' achievements (OECD, 2009). Given that countries of Sub-Saharan Africa constitute the greatest majority lagging behind in attaining Education for All goals as well as facing vast challenges of educational quality in all dimensions (UNESCO, 2014), urgent interventions to catch up with access to quality education in this sub region is pre-occupying. The post-2015 global development agenda is articulating on a shift from just access to education by all to focus on the quality of education as elaborated in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/4 (UNESCO, 2014). It is from this

background that instructional school leadership that seeks to understand and promote quality teaching accompanied by the ability to provide constructive feedback needs to be deeply reflected upon and explored as a contributing factor to educational quality improvement (Louis et al., 2010).

1.2 Research questions

In this study, I am going to examine the experiences and challenges of principals in implementing instructional school leadership in selected lay private secondary schools. This will take into consideration on one part the perceived understanding by school principals of the influence school leadership has on school quality, the existing contextual factors surrounding the leadership role of principals, their capacities and motivation as well as expectations of the school proprietors, public authorities and the community in the light of new evidence for quality school improvement. Although systemic change in educational leadership relies a lot on the efforts of various stakeholders in learning for leadership, school-based educational improvement relies more on instructional leadership personalized at the level of the school principal (Malakolunthu et al., 2014). From the context elaborated above, this study articulates on school leadership of lay private secondary schools in the North West Anglophone Region of Cameroon. The study focuses on the following research questions:

- a) What are the leadership experiences of school principals?

The exploration of the leadership perception and experiences of school principals forms the base in this study that seeks to connect school leadership to education quality improvement. Such understanding of shared

leadership experiences of school principals is anticipated to play a pivotal role with regard to which direction to take and how the process of paradigm shift in school leadership should go.

b) Which challenges do principals face in school leadership?

In regard to the principals involved in this study, the challenges they face in school leadership are anticipated more within the lay private schools in the Anglophone part of Cameroon but these challenges shall be taken further to mirror the situation in Cameroon and Sub-Saharan Africa in general in regard to school leadership that enhances teaching quality and learning outcomes from the global perspective.

1.3 Structure of the book

The presentation of this research work is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one gives the introduction, highlighting the context and problem. This chapter also connects various contextual dimensions of education quality with practice and personal experience and specifies the research questions of the study. Chapter two describes the state of research for the study at hand and integrates theoretical foundations. The methodological approach used in this research is described in chapter three following a process of two steps. First the description of the methodology of intervention and second, the presentation of the evaluation design which takes into consideration the research approach, data collection method, data analysis method and sample space. Chapter four describes the intervention used for the study, elaborating on how it was conducted, and its justification vis-à-vis education quality.

More specifically, it elaborates on the objectives of the intervention, the didactical planning which equally deepens the content area of the study and finally the development of the intervention, bringing out the connectivity between the research questions and the intervention objectives. The results of the evaluation are presented in chapter five. After the summary presentation of the kind of evaluation and instruments used in the study, the first part of this chapter gives the description of data and the second part gives the synthesis of the data description. The discussion of the findings is done in chapter six. After presenting the summary of the results, the results are discussed in relation to the context, educational quality dimensions and systemic change in educational quality. In the conclusion of chapter seven, suggestions for practice and implications for further research are presented.

2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Within the framework of improving quality in education, there has been concern on the relationship between leadership practices and student achievement (Bush, 2014). Although, contextual factors of teaching and learning are very central in analyzing school quality, the investigation of school leadership practices is very essential as it contributes significantly to variability in student achievements (Nettles & Herrington, 2007). Similarly, concerns for quality school results have made quality school leadership a priority aspect of education around the world (OECD, 2009).

This chapter therefore articulates on the theoretical and empirical backgrounds of school leadership vis-à-vis school quality, which constitute the base for this study. It equally radiates on the research questions of this study (cf. chapter 1.2). This study is contributing to the post-2015 education agenda whose priority is vested on good quality education focusing on learning outcomes (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2013). The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section examines the dimensions of leadership (cf. chapter 2.1) and the second section presents the possibility of developing school leadership (cf. chapter 2.1).

2.1 Dimension of leadership

In order to have a clearer and logical understanding of the dimension of leadership as, I have chosen to first explain leadership styles; second, talk about paradigm shift in school leadership and third, examine the connectivity between instructional school leadership and education quality.

2.1.1 Explanation of leadership styles

In this section, I describe leadership as used in education, then followed by explaining the main leadership styles.

Description of leadership in education

Varied terminologies have been used to describe leadership, with a paradigm shift from 'educational administration', through 'educational management' and currently, to 'educational leadership' (Gunter, 2004). It has been argued that this shift reflects a change of perspective from focusing only on executive implementation of set policies by school principals to developing and working on the vision of the institution (Bush et al., 2013). From this background, leadership is linked to changes while management is mostly concerned with routines. In summary, according to Yukl (2002), "Leadership involves a process of influence exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or group) to structure the activities or relationships in a group or organization" (p. 3). This definition lays emphasis on the process of social influence by one person (or group) on others (OECD, 2008). On the other hand, empirical research is more concerned with effective leadership by identifying behavior types that promote individual or group performance (Yukl et al., 2002). This argument is founded

on the premise that effective leadership leads to successful schools and educational systems, yet there is uncertainty about which set of behaviors are likely to produce the most outstanding learning outcomes (Bush et al., 2013). For the purpose of this study, I will describe three main ideal leadership styles, namely; administrative, transformational and instructional leadership styles.

The administrative leadership dimension

The administrative leadership style also described as the bureaucratic model of leadership focuses on organizational goals and policy issues, vested on hierarchy and top down management approaches (Bush 2014). It allocates authority and influence to the status of the positions within and out of the school (Leithwood et al., 1999). Given that such a leadership type does not include the concept of vision for the institution, its critical attribute is the focus on managing set activities rather than fore-casting on the future for improvement. The consequence is that, teachers working within the ambits of such a leadership style are not enthusiastic, not innovative and therefore do not bring about growth and achievements in learners and the school system at large (Bush, 2011).

The transformational leadership dimension

Transformational leadership style, though not only exclusive to education, is based on the commitment and capacity of the members of the institution (Leithwood et al., 1999). Its understanding is explained along several dimensions, some of which include providing school goals, building and sharing the school vision, offering individual support and a participatory culture. Associated with transformational leadership are two related sub-leadership models, namely:

transactional leadership and non-leadership. While transactional leadership reinforces exchange relationship between the leader and his subordinates in aspects of practice, values and feedback; non-leadership is laissez-faire or passive leadership also described as the absence of leadership (Shatzer et al., 2014).

Although the transformational leadership model is hailed for being linked to the provision of a broader bottom-up approach bringing about a shared vision with the entire staff and the likelihood of facilitating change (Shatzer et al., 2014), it is criticized for being normative in its approach, articulating on the process by which leaders seek to influence students' outcome, rather than working in the direction of those outcomes (Bush et al., 2013).

The instructional leadership dimension

Instructional leadership is mainly concerned with the students learning outcome and has as critical attributes, defining the school mission, managing the teaching/learning process and promoting a positive learning climate (Hallinger, 2003). Bush and Glover (2003) describe instructional leadership as follows:

Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behavior of teachers in working with students. Leaders' influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself (p. 12).

From the afore-mentioned description, it can be argued that instructional leadership reflects both the improvement of student outcomes and the professional development of teachers (Bush et al., 2013). Another school of thought

extends the argument that, instructional school principals enhance a positive school climate by ensuring high standards of excellence thereby putting in place the culture of high expectation from the school community as well as consciously providing adequate time for classroom teaching and learning than on administrative activities (Shatzer et al., 2014). Researchers view instructional leadership as being very significant because it addresses the main goal of educational quality which is student learning outcome (Bush et al., 2013). In spite of this assertion, instructional leadership is not well understood by many school principals, worse still, most of their job descriptions do not carry aspects of instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is also criticized for ignoring some important aspects of school life such as socialization, welfare activities and students' self-esteem (Bush, 2011).

Comparison of leadership styles

Although, each of the ideal forms of leadership discussed above, namely; administrative, transformational and instructional only provides a distinctive and unique perspective of school leadership, thus making each of them limited in one way when compared to the combined task of a school principal, reflecting and discussing on them provides a useful base that links them to the exigencies of effective school leadership (Bush et al., 2013). In spite of the fact that there are many ways in which school leaders think and work, the two well used ways are 'transformational' and 'instructional' leadership (Hattie, 2009). Research makes a clear distinction between 'transformational' and 'instructional' leaders as follows: transformational leaders are those who inspire teachers, work together

with the teachers to attain common goals and ensuring that teachers have enough time to conduct their teaching while instructional leaders focus on the quality and impact on school activities on students' learning, having high expectations of teachers on students' learning, ensuring that disruption of learning is minimized, visit classrooms, monitor and evaluate the quality and nature of learning in school (Hattie, 2009). In a more detailed dimension, findings of the research on school leadership effects consolidated in a number of reviews and meta-analyses (OECD, 2008) show that certain leadership styles are associated with measurable improvements in student learning (Hallinger and Heck, 1998; Marzano et al., 2005; Robinson, 2007; Waters et al., 2003). The studies illustrate this assertion with the meta-analysis conducted by Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) on 22 studies and 2,883 principals which showed that the impact of transformation leadership on student achievement had an effect size of 0.11, while the impact of instructional leadership had an effect size of 0.42 (Hattie, 2012). Following the results from this meta-analysis, the effect size (which measures the strength of a phenomenon – leadership type) of instructional leadership is about four times greater than that for transformational leadership, justifying the need for school leadership to be focused more on instructional leadership style in order to achieve better learning outcomes.

The above summary suggests a greater tilt of quality school leadership towards the instructional leadership model. Given that school leadership is becoming very challenging in pursuit of good quality education which lays emphasis on learning outcomes, it is imperative for school principals to reflect on their leadership styles.

2.1.2 Paradigm shift in school leadership

The understanding of leadership styles and their implications on learner outcomes (cf. chapter 2.1.1) calls for a paradigm shift in school leadership. Such a shift needs to align with the evidence which shows that the education quality improves when teachers are supported in the direction of improving teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2014). School leadership which calls for a shift from administrative to instructional leadership is rooted in the beliefs of principals and systemic level factors. In this regard, for such a paradigm shift to be sustained, a well reflected process of gradual change needs to be put in place (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Effective change does not just take place by chance but follows some steps (Marsee, 2002). These steps can be summarized into four as follows: The first step is that of orientation during which there is the reflection on the problem leading to discussions that generate the need for change. The second step is that of preparation during which strategies for change are developed, training, visit of institutions with best practice or learn from persons with best practices.

Step three is that of early use which comprises of using the competences built to start implementing change, exchanging with others and getting supervision and feedback for continuous improvement. The fourth and final step is that of routine use which comprises of using acquired competences in daily routine activities, making use of peer learning, learning communities, evaluation and feedback. In this connection, the paradigm shift in school leadership needs to follow similar steps. For this shift to be effective, whole system comprising of the school, community, district and government must work in synergy

with the vision of new leadership to bring about the needed change (Fullan, 2010). Such a paradigm shift is essential for school systems of both public and private education providers. While research reveal that the school principal has diverse roles comprising of manager, administrator, instructional leader and curriculum leader at different points in the day, it is argued that principals give more attention to managerial and administrative tasks at the expense of instructional supervision (Duze, 2012). Further still, there is urgent need for change whereby instructional leadership is given priority considering that the core purpose of the school is teaching and learning (Duze, 2012). In the on-going debate on the issue of curriculum and instructional leadership roles of the principal, Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) assert that principals equipped with instructional leadership and school improvement skills adequately monitor the teaching and learning progress. This argument supports the view that school leadership should change from being too focused on managerial roles to giving more attention on curriculum and instruction.

2.1.3 Instructional leadership and connectivity to education quality

Research linked to student outcomes show significant relationships between some school leadership practices and student learning (Nettles & Herrington, 2007). This is the case of instructional school leadership model that shows evidence of a direct correlation with student achievement. To uphold this assertion, research of school leadership derived from eleven studies of the effects of leadership on student outcomes show that school leadership that directly promote and participate in the professional development of teachers with focus on student learning has a more significant effect size on student outcomes, thus providing

empirical support for instructional leadership (Robinson, 2007). Similar results from meta-analysis demonstrate that there is adequate relationship between leadership and student achievement with effect size discussed and analyzed as a correlation and additionally revealing that effective school leadership comprises not only of what to do, but importantly, when to do what, with whom, and how and why to do it with focus on improving the quality of education (Waters et al., 2003). The connection leadership attributes that create impact on students' learning, directly contributes to education quality improvement. By extension, school principals who participate with teachers in improving the teaching and learning processes have a more detailed appreciation of changes related to students' learning and thus inject relevant support and measures towards the attainment of learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1998).

From the teachers' perspective, constructive feedback on teaching and learning; talking with teachers and promoting professional growth are dimensions of instructional leadership acclaimed as very effective in improving teaching and learning outcomes (Blasé et al., 1999). Based on the presentation above, there is the evidence that professional quality school leadership makes a difference in improving learning outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2004). Although researchers highlight the stance that, in addition to training, the school environment and system should be enabling enough to permit the change towards instructional leadership role (Leithwood et al., 2004), what is crucial is the understanding of how the effects of leadership promote the learning of students, the main attributes of instructional leadership and how high-quality leaders achieve this impact at the school level.

2.2 Developing quality school leadership

The question of developing quality leadership for school principals is quite crucial and complex if leadership challenges must be effectively overcome especially given that professional school principals with instructional repertoire are in a great minority (Hallinger, 2003). Many contextual factors surround the quality development of school leadership, thus making training alone not adequate enough to respond to all challenges in school leadership in the light of better student outcome (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). In this regard, this section describes the development of quality school leadership under two perspectives; first; the didactical dimension and second, the systemic dimension.

2.2.1 Didactical dimension

The didactical aspect lays a lot of emphasis on instructional leadership training that necessarily has to integrate theory and practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). While asserting that the didactical perspective has to be carefully planned to improve school outcomes, such training in school leadership needs to explore the beliefs, experience and the roles of school principals to ensure that appropriate leadership skills are developed (OECD, 2009). The teaching of theories alone on leading change is not enough if the change agents themselves are not equipped with change leadership skills (Lewis & Gross, 2012). To ensure that leadership skills acquired during training are sustained and yield more significant results, the training model needs to provide enough time for reflection, make use of the experiences of principals and extend training throughout the careers of school principals with mentoring and monitoring integrated (Darling-Hammond

et al., 2007). This suggests the putting in place of pre- and in-service training programs for school principals based on theories and practices associated with student achievement. It should be noted that training in aspects of educational quality improvement which requires changing the perception of the role of the trainee is very difficult and therefore requires effective and open communication (Krogull et al., 2014). This is important because most principals have been used to and have only experienced administrative leadership style.

Although the influencing factors on school leadership and acquisition of skills and new knowledge vis-à-vis school quality are essential in the development of school leadership, it is argued that to better attain student learning outcomes, school leaders need professional capital in all its three dimensions, namely human capital, social capital and decisional capital; which are connected to the fundamental basis of improving teaching (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). Proponents of the concept of professional capital like Hargreaves & Fullan (2013) further argue that, education like any business requires an investment in order to yield profit thus an investment is needed to add value to professional effectiveness.

Given that decisional capital has to do with the competence to make informed judgment about learners, which implies taking judgment on professional effectiveness and also considering that this capacity is developed with time; it is crucial to fully embed it in the didactical development of school leadership. Although within the confines of quality education improvement, the ultimate indicator of successful professional training of teachers is the student achievement (Lange, 2014); the same indicator can also be used as a

further measure of the level of success for the training of school principals in quality school leadership. In this regard, more attention needs to be paid on the quality of monitoring so as to assertion proper feedback for improvement (Newton, 2010). In spite of the many contributing factors connected with the development of leadership, principals can surmount the challenges by reflecting deeply on their understanding, importance and use of feedback. Investing on clear and effective communication, enhancing learning communities, using decisional capital and fully putting into practice the instructional leadership style on the way of school quality improvement gives added value on school leadership (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2013; Gauthier et al., 2004).

2.2.2 Systemic dimension

It is important to note that policy and practice on school leadership must respond to the rapidly changing context for schools (OECD, 2009). This argument is backed by the fact that advances in science and technology and global changes in socio-economic context, are significantly accelerating the amount of knowledge and information available in the world today. Although the OECD *Improving School Leadership* project (2009) opines that school leadership that adequately prepares students to face global challenges and developments should be that which works towards the improvement of school and student outcomes; the actual situation is that school leadership is not evolving enough to deal with such complex challenges.

The systemic dimension is therefore essential in quality leadership development to respond to the prevailing challenges and should address the role the state, district, education providers and the institution play in formulating,

developing and enhancing policies that ensure school leadership development as well as reflect on the motivation and incentives that are required to spur principals to work towards student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Arguments in support of the systemic dimension in improving different aspects of educational quality reveal that, the involvement of the whole system approach, significantly improves student achievement (Fullan, 2010). The systemic dimension is very crucial for improving schools in developing countries especially in the direction of developing innovative management (Verspoor, 1989).

The expectation is that, school leadership should make a difference to student outcomes by creating the right environment for teachers to improve classroom practice and student learning which from a systemic leadership development perspective can be improved by another dimension of professional capital called the 'pull-push-nudge' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013: 39). In this context, 'Push' refers to encouraging as well as giving of support and attention to persons reluctant to embrace the change aspect within the system while the notion of 'pull' is when peoples' excitement is raised, and they are brought into the vision of change needed. On the other hand, 'nudge' is when people are guided on time to make better choices and take informed decisions (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). It is therefore incumbent on principals, policy makers and education system stakeholders to have a deep understanding this dimension of professional capital to monitor the effect and development of school leadership. In order for schools to have school leaders with instructional focus and skills, it is not enough to improve their training, but that districts or state should also fulfill two conditions. First, create standards that spell out clear expectations

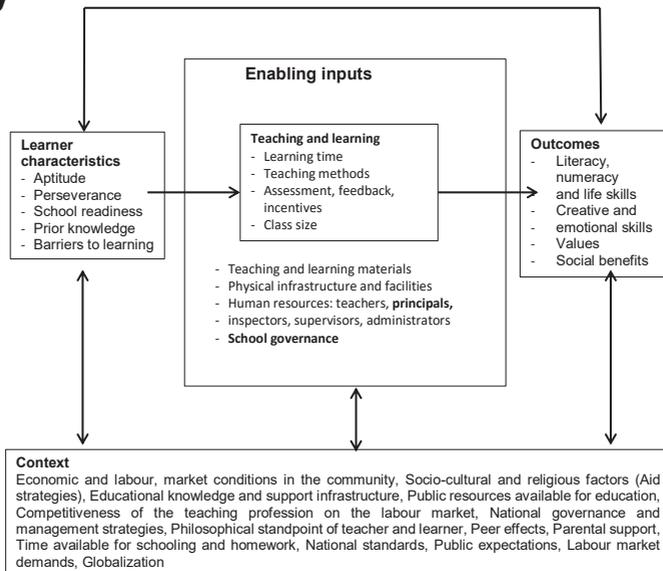
about what school leaders need to know and do to improve instruction and learning and that forms the basis for holding them accountable for results; and secondly provide conditions and incentives that support the ability of leaders to meet those standards (DeVita et al., 2007). Some researchers in support of this view suggest that quality school leaders should be hired by a committee with a clear understanding of the leadership needs of the school selecting the best candidate based on criteria that meet the goal of the school (Clifford, 2012). Given that there is global concern for enhancement of educational quality, the systemic development of school leadership and an investigation of all education providers, both public and private becomes necessary. The Dakar forum of education for all (UNESCO, 2000), highlights the role of private education as complementary to public school development. The understanding of private education in the context of low income countries requires reflected regulations by the state. On the contrary, government policies are inadequate as they only focus on administration procedures with little emphasis on school leadership (Pinyakong et al., 2007) and the public character of schools.

2.3 Embedding school leadership in the dimensions of educational quality

The practice of instructional school leadership by school principals relies on their understanding of different quality dimensions and their interconnectivities. Bearing in mind that teachers are the most influential factor in student learning (Gauthier & Dembélé, 2004), the framework of quality dimensions is necessary to enable the school principal to logically identify and articulate on the factors that can improve quality from his/her sphere of influence.

Figure 1 on the framework for understanding education quality, from the perspective of UNESCO (2004), brings out the relationship between various influencing factors of quality dimensions highlighting quality as input, process, output and outcome. Most importantly, this framework provides the broad structure of monitoring educational quality and analyzing policy-related decisions meant for educational quality improvement. Given that pedagogic services and the ministry of education are the main structures of a country that endorse change in pedagogic approaches and practices; school principals with a good understanding of the framework of quality dimensions, can better link the school to the afore mentioned aspects in matters of school quality improvement from a systemic level (Gauthier & Dembélé, 2004).

Figure 1: A framework for understanding education quality



(adapted from UNESCO, 2004: 26)

In the framework of quality as a process, especially at the school level where the influence of the principal is very strong, standards of instructional leadership, learner-achievement criteria, good climate and effective monitoring can be put in place by the principal to enhance classroom practice of quality teaching for better learning outcome.

There is very limited research on school improvement in Sub-Saharan Africa. Research and practice in the area of school improvement in Africa has largely been initiated, supported, directed and realized by international aid agencies and external researchers (Townsend, 2007). Therefore, from my deductions, much research material on school improvement in Africa is necessary to provide for adequate suggestions on school leadership improvement in the region.

2.4 Specific research questions based on the theoretical background

Based on the background given, the following research questions are reflected:

- (i). What are the experiences of the principals in implementing instructional school leadership? This question is further put under the following sub-questions to illicit broader experiences of school principals from an in-depth perspective:
 - a) What is the focus of the principal in his/her leadership role?
 - b) what is the nature of the relationship between the principal and the teacher?
 - c) what is the perception of school principals on student learning?

- d) what practical steps does the principal take to improve teaching quality?
- (ii). What are the challenges of principals in implementing instructional school leadership; more specifically challenges in enhancing teaching quality and learning outcomes?

3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter elaborates on the research approach, the description of the methods used in the study and the sample space. The research questions as presented in chapter 2.4 are connected with the perceptions and processes of education quality improvement from the dimension of school leadership quality. This chapter is structured into two sub-chapters following the process of the study. The first section describes the methodology of intervention (cf. chapter 3.1) while the second section focuses on the presentation of the evaluation design (cf. chapter 3.2). The evaluation design is further explained under six aspects, namely: research approach, data collection method, data analysis method, sample space, problems encountered, and knowledge provided.

3.1 Intervention: A training workshop on school leadership

The intervention I chose was to carry out a training workshop for secondary school principals on instructional school leadership. As shown in chapter 1, from the contextual perspective, leadership constitutes a major challenge for schools in Cameroon as most principals of schools do not reflect on the implication their leadership style has on school quality. With my intervention of carrying out a training workshop on school leadership, I want to give an

example of how this challenge could be reflected upon and overcome towards education quality improvement especially in the most hit Sub-Saharan Africa.

I will present the methodology of the training workshop under the following dimensions; first on training workshop as a method; second, on the dimension of output and outcome within the framework of training; third, Integration of the training content, objectives and facilitation in the training process; fourth, the dimension of implementation decisions and fifth, on the dimension of added knowledge that the training provides.

Training workshop as a method

This intervention by carrying out a training workshop is a very suitable method for situations in which one seeks to understand the perceptions, experiences and challenges involved in implementing a model of an aspect in school quality improvements such as instructional school leadership. The training therefore falls within the framework of quality professional development for school leaders that open a window on where and how to take action towards quality education improvement (OECD, 2009). Primordially, within the framework of the post-2015 agenda of making education a priority in development cooperation countries (UNESCO, UNICEF, 2015), the training workshop for school leaders in itself has to be designed to reflect the criteria and indicators of the teaching quality which constitute a major factor of educational quality (UNESCO, 2004). The research discussion of the main indicator of teaching quality settles on student achievement (Smith et al., 2009; Lange, 2014) and is thus amplified in this intervention. This training therefore underscores the argument that in improving teaching quality to attain student achievement,

the school environment and related influences like school leadership need to be considered.

Within the global framework of investing in quality education as a catalyst for inclusive development (UNESCO, 2014), added value or new knowledge is essential for discourse in matters of educational quality and it is therefore imperative that the training workshop in professional school leadership is documented. This documentation of the intervention is additionally necessary to serve the purpose of transparency and the sustainability of reflections in educational quality discourse. The didactical perspective for school leadership has to be carefully planned to assure meaningful change towards the needed quality through training. Given that change is a gradual process that cannot be achieved just by an automatic extinction of old ideas nor by a simple addition of new ideas (Ruhf, 2003), training in school leadership as per this study should be linked to the experience of the principals ensuring that their perceived ideas about education quality, the influencing factors and their role as principals are deeply explored. Details of this didactical approach give a more comprehensive perception of the change process by this intervention (cf. chapter 4).

As shown in chapter 2, instructional school leadership makes a difference in improving learning outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2004). Within the framework of the global school quality improvement agenda, this intervention may be perceived to be small in scope. However, from a logical point of reflection, a broad theme like quality education improvement can be better investigated through the different lenses of its attributes, influencing factors and dimensions in different in-depth little contextual areas connecting the study to empirical data and theoretical

foundations to create an impact in the wider window. In chapter 6.2 I will show how such a small intervention can be included in the broad agenda of quality education in the post-2015 agenda that is concerned with the global discussion on education (UNESCO & UNICEF; 2015). An important aspect of this intervention is to ensure that the reflections on the experiences of school principals and their challenges on school leadership are explored in order to reveal and change the thought patterns and concepts of learning. It is therefore necessary that training explores the perceived ideas of school leaders about their existing practices and critically expose the limited or adverse impact such practices produce in the light of new evidence in quality. In this intervention therefore, I consider making school principals realize and gain added knowledge in the alternatives demonstrated in the training workshop. This will further improve teaching quality and eventually learning outcomes.

Dimension of output and outcome within the framework of the training workshop

The training workshop for school principals on school leadership as used in this study considers very importantly working towards the attainment of student learning achievement (UNESCO, 2005). Based on this, the intervention beginning from the design of its objectives to the training activities considers the dimensions of both the output and outcome as results to attain. While output describes the immediate products or services obtained from the activities and input of the intervention; outcome on the other hand reflects a long-lasting effect or long-term change in peoples' life experienced during or after the intervention (UNDP, 2009). From the didactical

perspective, the training workshop on school leadership addresses the acquisition of knowledge following output objectives and the acquisition of competences following outcome objectives. Explicitly, the outcome objective of the training is that principals of schools develop instructional leadership competence and practice it in their professional life to enhance greater achievement of learner outcome. On the other hand, the output objectives focus on principals gaining theoretical understanding and the connectivity of different quality dimensions. These comprise of educational quality, ideal leadership styles and the contributing role of instructional leadership style to learning outcomes. Details of how the intervention of the study at hand addresses the difference between knowledge and competences are described in chapter 4.

Integration of the training content, objectives and facilitation in the training process

The training process of this intervention relates to the fact that, in working towards the improvement of student learning outcome, attributes of teaching quality need to take into consideration principles of learner orientation, active and participatory learning and above all, the goal of student activation (Lange, 2014). Therefore, the topic and objectives of the training workshop are included in the process of the training workshop in a variety of ways to ensure that principals gain the experience and empowerment required of them to enhance quality teaching. In this regard, the school principals who in this intervention are participants of the training workshop have the chance to be learners, experiencing change of perspectives, embedded in a wide variety of teaching and learning methods, work on higher order tasks to activate their cognitive repertoire and move

out of the box. The content covered was addressed by two main topics; first introduction to education quality with focus on its description, dimensions and framework for its understanding and learning outcome as a determinant of educational quality (UNESCO, 2004); second, leadership types beginning with the distinguishing characteristics of administrative, transformational and instructional leadership types and deep reflection on the paradigm shift from administrative to instructional leadership type as a strategy to improve and enhance school quality.

In the entire process, the experiences of participants are explored, challenges of implementation of quality school leadership evoked and action plan for implementation of best practices developed. The training process is participatory with roles of the facilitator and participants emphasizing a shift from administrative to instructional leadership style. It reinforces perception checking, change of perspectives and focus on learning outcomes. The process equally takes into consideration the use of variety of methods such as think-pair-share, individual reflection especially on higher order tasks, partner work, group work, station work, text analysis, drawing of lots, role play and expert group interviews all relevant to content and process characteristic of learner-oriented, participatory, active and learner-activation teaching which constitute quality teaching. The setting of the workshop room is dynamic to ensure various aspects of effective communication. This training therefore makes use of various configurations of sitting such as semi-circular arrangement for plenary session and small group setting for group work. The development of knowledge and competences progressed with working from perceived ideas and experiences, through reflections on the basis of theoretical and empirical

evidence to new knowledge. The processes and methods blended with the content as an added value.

Dimension of the implementation decision on the training workshop

The major decision on the training workshop involves different stakeholders. Therefore, in my position as a Coordinator of an in-service teacher training program in Cameroon and in agreement with the Regional Delegate of Education, for the North West Region of Cameroon I have decided to invite principals of private secondary schools in the North West Region for a one day workshop in order for them to discover the challenges of school leadership in the light of school quality improvement, reflect on their perceptions and experiences, gain new knowledge and develop the means to change this situation by adapting and using techniques that are globally known from theoretical and empirical backgrounds thereby making it possible to be efficient to improve the conditions and the results in the professional environment that is quite demanding.

Nine principals from lay private schools from Bamenda in the North West Region of Cameroon participated in the training. The group had both sexes represented for gender mix though with more males. Given the heterogeneity of my participants in age and gender, I worked having in mind the breaking of gender stereotypes during the training from an implicit and transparent viewpoint. The age difference demands for activities that engage all the age groups and sharing of a wide range of experiences. All the participants are from within the same area, the Bamenda environs to ease transport cost. Chapter 4 gives details of the implementation decisions to this intervention especially from the didactical plan.

3.2 Evaluation

The evaluation of this study is conducted within the research framework of qualitative approach. I will therefore describe in the first instance, qualitative approach (cf. chapter 3.2.1), secondly, individual interviews as method of data collection (cf. chapter 3.2.2), thirdly, qualitative content analysis (cf. chapter 3.2.3); fourthly, the sample (cf. chapter 3.2.4), fifth, problems encountered (cf. chapter 3.2.5) and sixth, knowledge provided by this evaluation (cf. chapter 3.2.6).

3.2.1 Qualitative approach

The study at hand makes use of the qualitative approach in investigating the challenges of school leadership. Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). In other words, Savin-Baden and Major (2013) also refer to it as theories on interpretation (hermeneutics) and human experience (phenomenology) with the aim to investigate the meaning of social phenomena as experienced by the people themselves. Further description show that qualitative research design emphasizes on the gathering of data (generally in the form of words) on natural phenomena and focuses on lived individual experiences, on society and on culture (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 2014). Although there is much diversity according to different types of qualitative studies, the main aim is generally to provide an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social circumstances, their experiences, perspectives, and histories (Moriarty, 2011). In qualitative research, samples are small in scale

and selected on the basis of important criteria; making the data very detailed, extensive and rich. Furthermore, the researcher and the research participant(s) are in close contact, with an interactive and development character, allowing for deeper exploration of issues (Moriarty, 2011). In carrying out qualitative research, the following steps within its process are primordial: inhabiting a philosophical and personal stance, framing the study, choosing a research approach, collecting data and writing about the research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

Within the framework of qualitative research, a philosophical stance is very important as it guides the views of researchers and their work, clarifies the assumptions about the reasons for choosing a particular research design (Trede & Higgs, 2009). This therefore implies that a philosophical stance is not a tool but just a guiding perspective about the nature of truth and human behavior and thus the very foundation of research for which researchers need to identify and articulate. On the other hand, Savin-Baden and Major (2013), describe a personal stance as a position taken towards an issue that is derived from a person's beliefs and views about the world; indeed, a position that is dynamic but influences on research. Although this influence is little, personal stance tend to raise questions about how much of the research is linked to or influenced by the researcher's beliefs, interests and experiences.

Qualitative research as a discovering form of theory formation follows model of research process in which data collection, interpretation and the resulting knowledge finding are closely linked (Bohnsack et al., 2010). In this regard, the search for further data is only finished at the moment when a theoretical saturation of the findings in the

research field has been reached. Bohnsack et al. (2010) further argue that, although qualitative research proceeds without framing a hypothesis, this does not mean that there are no clear formulations of questions at the beginning of the research process. Using the qualitative approach, note should be taken not to give statements on quantitative relations (Bohnsack et al., 2010).

This study at hand therefore makes use of the qualitative research approach to allow for a close investigation of the beliefs and experiences principals of secondary schools have about school leadership and their views in connection to educational quality. Orientation towards understanding is consciously used as a principle of gaining knowledge. Furthermore, this approach is used to explore possibilities of paradigm shift in school leadership. Above all, given that this study is examining processes and outcomes, qualitative approach becomes inevitable. Within this framework of qualitative study, I hold a constructivist stance. In describing constructivism, Raskin (2002) stresses on the aspect of philosophical paradigm which is based on the fact that knowledge is constituted by human-made constructions.

Alternatively said, constructivism suggests that individuals make and socially construct their own meaning. This therefore means that researchers, who hold the constructivist view, do not begin research with a theory but rather inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings throughout the research process (Creswell, 2003). The argument is backed by the fact that the constructivists use a range of approaches to seek individuals' reconstruction of their realities, collecting data by methods of interviews and narratives. I therefore find the constructivist view

useful in exploring the understanding of school principals in my study area of “challenges in school leadership” for a meaningful contribution to school quality improvement.

3.2.2 Evaluation by individual interviews

The method of interviews and more specifically semi-structured individual interviews have been chosen to collect data in this study. The description is presented below. Within the framework of qualitative approach in research, three main types of interviews are distinguished, namely: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). For the purpose of this study, I will focus on semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews like structured interviews have pre-defined questions and topic to cover. However, unlike structured interview, the interviewer in semi-structured interview is more flexible to tailor questions where appropriate out of the guide to suit the needs of the situation, context and the result of the interviewee’s answer to the previous question (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The advantage of semi-structured interview is that it fits well when the researcher has only one opportunity to interview someone and when faced with limited time but it however has the weakness of not providing the interviewee the opportunity to bring out his/her own unique perspective (Bryman, 2012).

In conducting semi-structured interviews, it is important for researchers to construct guiding interview questions in advance that make clear what the researcher wants to talk about and how best to engage the interviewees in the conversations (deMarras & Lapan, 2004). To facilitate this process, three guiding statements for researchers are necessary. First, short clear questions which lead to detailed response from interviewees; second, questions

that ask interviewees to recall specific experiences in detail encourage fuller narratives; and third, a few broad open-ended questions work better than a long series of closed-ended questions.

From the above description, I chose semi-structured interview for collecting data in this study because it gives the opportunity for the school principals (interviewees) to provide feedback, allowing the researcher to amend his/her line of inquiry. It also provides the possibility of additionally disclosing issues that had not been identified by the researcher, for better incorporation in the quality improvement process in school leadership. Above all, the elaborate responses to questions by the interviewees' reveal the thoughts, opinions, perspectives, or descriptions of specific experiences of respondents which is crucial for evaluating training on school leadership. Given that I had limited time at my disposal, I chose the summative approach by conducting the interview at the end of the intervention.

The semi-structured interview model is more appropriate for this study as it permits me to focus my interactions with one interview session yet allowing for elaborate expression of ideas by the interviewees. More specifically, semi-structured individual interviews are used in my study, given that principals in their daily profession, mostly work as individuals. This aligns with the strength of decisional capital that is very relevant to principals in their school leadership positions (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). It is also easier and faster to arrange individual appointments with principals than group appointments. In this study, I put in place the interview method as described above in several ways. I first select three principals of lay private

secondary schools from amongst those who took part in the training workshop consciously ensuring that both sexes are represented. A small number of interviewees is appropriate, given that I am using a qualitative approach that focuses more on an in-depth social inquiry not determined by size (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). For each of the selected principals, here called interviewees, I make a separate appointment for individual interviews. I prepare four semi-structured interview questions that articulate around the subject and the research questions of the study which anchor on the experiences and challenges of school principals in school leadership within the framework of school quality improvement. The questions are structured in a way that they elicit thoughts, perspectives and description of specific experiences of the selected principals as an aspect of checking the quality of the use of interview method (deMarrais, 2004).

These questions are documented and for each of them, aspects of paraphrasing are put to ensure unambiguity of comprehension if such a situation arises. The documentation of the questions also helps to ensure that the same focal issues are asked to the other interviewees thus assuring fairness objectivity and staying close to the subject of the interview. To reduce distractions, I set a quiet place for the interview. During the interview, the interviewee and I sit facing each other but not too close to allow for a relaxed environment of discussion. To assure authenticity, transparency, additional quality and verification of the interviewee's ideas, I record the interview session using an audio recorder as well as jot down key points that may be useful especially for follow-up. Considering the importance of having in-depth information from the interviewee in his/her natural state, at the beginning of the session, I

present myself as one who has come to learn from his/her experiences and encourage the interviewee to use as much time as needed to respond to questions. In the course of the interview, I ensure by myself not to interrupt except in cases of prompts or follow-up questions.

3.2.3 Qualitative content analysis

Data analysis has been described as one of the most critical phases in qualitative research process and as a systematic search for knowledge; a way to process qualitative data such that researchers have the chance to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, critique or generate theories (Hatch, 2002; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Qualitative analysis is not only demanding but also requires that the researcher should be dynamic, intuitive and creative, able to think, reason and theorize (Jones, 2007).

In this study, I choose qualitative content analysis which is described as a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages (Cole 1988). It can be used on photographs, videotapes or any item that can be made into text. Weiss (1994) purports that in content analysis, artifacts of social communication such as written documents or transcripts of recorded verbal communication are used. With this background and according to Krippendorff (2003), content analysis is connected to making meaningful and valid inferences from text and linking them to their context (p. 18). This definition does not limit content analysis to written material but by extending it to works of art, images, maps, sounds, symbols and even numerical records. For it to be reliable and scientific, the criteria of selection used

need to be sufficiently exhaustive to account for each variation of message and must be consistently applied so that other readers or researchers looking at the same messages would obtain the same or similar results (Weiss, 1994). Such criteria mean explicit rules established before the commencement of actual analysis. For consistency and transparency, the categories that arise when developing these criteria should reflect all relevant aspects of the messages as well as maintain the exact wording used in the statements. Given that content analysis can be aptly employed to examine virtually any type of communication, it can either be used on quantitative or qualitative aspects of communication messages (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Two types of content analysis are distinguished, namely inductive and deductive types. While inductive analysis focuses on cases where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when it is fragmented; the deductive type is used in studies whose general aim is to test a previous theory in a different situation or to compare categories at different time periods (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative scholars frankly tend to find themselves in the hermeneutic circle, using known literature to contextualize their readings of given texts (Krippendorff, 2003).

Content analysis follow three main phases; first the preparation phase which focuses on selecting the unit of analysis; second, the organizing phase, which deals with the coding, categorization and abstraction; and third, the phase of reporting the analyzing process and results (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Content analysis has the strength that it is flexible, thus suitable for analyzing the content of both visual and verbal data. However, it has the constraint of being vulnerable

to over interpretation by the researcher and it is time consuming. In spite of its limitations, qualitative content analysis is the suitable choice to help bring meaning to the planned investigation on the subject of my study, on challenges and experiences in school leadership because it deeply explores the relationship between the interview text and contextual meaning, helping in the understanding of the views and opinions of the school principals.

In this study, the content analysis follows three phases. In the first phase the data is prepared by considering a number of aspects. The theme of analysis is selected and for this study it is structured on school leadership and its connectivity to school quality taking into consideration the research questions (Guthrie et al., 2004). This is followed by listening to the documented audio record of the three interview sessions and transcription of the interview conversations in its entirety respecting the different instances and sessions. The audio and written documentations are listened to and read in between the lines respectively so as to make sense out of it.

The second phase commences with the coding of the source of data to ensure anonymity most especially the name of the school and name of the principal interviewed. This is followed by open coding whereby the notes and headings are written in the interview text while reading (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The written material is read through again and additional headings and notes are written by the margin. My transcription is limited to manifest content. Open coding is followed by the grouping of content categories under higher order headings. This is aimed at reducing the number of categories and bringing similar ones together, thereby facilitating the description of the phenomenon and

increasing understanding towards knowledge generation (Burnard, 1991). In the study at hand, the abstraction process is followed by the analysis process and the description of results whereby the meaning or description of the content of a category constitute the result (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The content of a given category is described through the corresponding sub-category.

3.2.4 Sample

Sampling is a complex issue in qualitative research, with the complexity mostly arising from the lack of clear guidelines. Two types of sampling are distinguished, namely: purposeful and theoretical (Coyne, 1997). The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases, that is, cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research (Patton, 1990). Coyne (1997) purports that purposeful sample may be seen to mean the same as selective sampling. Selective sampling is determined by the researcher and takes into consideration the time available to him/her; site, selection of people according to the aim of the research and considering the appropriate categories of people according to age, gender, status, role and location. On the other hand, theoretical sampling is the process of data collection whereby the researcher simultaneously collects, codes and analyses, in order to decide where to sample next (Coyne, 1997). In theoretical sampling, researchers have the tendency to first go to the group which they believe will maximize the possibilities of obtaining data. A strength of theoretical sampling over purposeful sampling, is that it is more flexible, giving the researcher the latitude to shift plans and ensure that data collected reflects what is occurring in the field.

For this study, I have chosen purposeful sampling, composed of three principals, one female and two males from three privately run secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. These three took part in the intervention (cf. chapter 4). I have equally chosen to work with lay private schools in Cameroon because they have the most heterogeneous composition of students from both the academic and social backgrounds, thus providing the pool of issues that fit in the framework of the subject of study, in regard to challenges in school leadership. This sample is drawn from amongst the principals who participated at the training intervention on instructional school leadership (cf. chapter 4). The three principals in the sample are given the following anonymous description:

Principal PM1:

This is a principal of a private school located in a large city. At the point of data collection, the school under the leadership of PM1 has an enrolment of about 1800 students with the number of boys almost equal to that of girls. The teaching staff size is about 100, of which about one quarter is female. PM1 is more than 40 years old and has been principal for close to 10 years. PM1 has served for close to 25 years as teacher.

Principal PM2:

PM2 is a principal of a private school located in a large city with a student enrolment of about 240 of which about two thirds is female. The school has a teaching staff size of about 40 of which about one quarter is female at the point of data collection. PM2 is more than 40 years old and has been principal for less than 5 years. PM2 has served as teacher for close to 25 years.

Principal PF3

This is a principal of a private school located in a large city, and having a student population of about 400 of which three quarters are girls. The teaching staff size is about 45 of which the female constitute two fifth at the point of data collection. PF3 is more than 40 years old and has served as principal for less than five years. The longevity of PF3 as teacher is about 15 years.

3.2.5 limits of the data

Although, the use of qualitative approach in this study gives a deep interpretation, experiences and exposure of the challenges of school principals in school leadership, its limitation as used in this study is that with the small sample size, the results cannot be used to generalize on the entire population.

3.2.6 Knowledge provided for by the evaluation

The knowledge provided in this evaluation is about the process and reality or thinking of the perceptions of individual people. It builds a model to describe a phenomenon in a conceptual form thereby articulating on both theories on interpretation and individual experience (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The evaluation in this study has therefore given deeper insight of the experiences and challenges of school principals in school leadership from the individual deep reflections. Since the abstraction in content analysis of this evaluation is done against empirical basis, clearer aspects of problem description and a clue to the research questions of this study are revealed that can be used both at the local level of the study area as well as in the global agenda of educational quality improvement. By interacting

with school principals during the interview sessions, I have equally learnt more about their roles as principals as well as other contextual factors that affect their professional functioning from their individual descriptive experiences.

4

INTERVENTION: TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR PRINCIPALS

This chapter describes the practice of my intervention by reflecting on my personal context, how the intervention was carried out, what was done and the principles and practices underlying educational quality and best practice.

My intervention primarily involved nine secondary school principals. These principals influence over four hundred teachers and close to eight thousand students being indicative of the influencing role of school principals in shaping the educational landscape.

Besides the theoretical background, the motivation for conducting the intervention comes from my personal experience with the educational system in Cameroon. I am very committed to the course of educational quality improvement in Cameroon and Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole as I did my primary, secondary and high school studies in the North West Region of Cameroon. During this time, I experienced as a student the challenges and limitations of education that is not focused on learning outcomes and above all having passed through school principals who focused more on administrative procedures. To buttress my personal context further, I am presently working in the North West Region of Cameroon where the

study at hand is conducted and where I further experience and feel the challenges connected with school quality improvement amongst which is school leadership on my day to day work.

Following my presentation in chapter 3, I decided to carry out as an intervention, a training workshop for principals of lay private schools in the North West Region of Cameroon on the topic, “instructional school leadership for education quality improvement”. This training workshop took place on the 8th of November 2014 with nine principals in attendance.

The purpose of the intervention is to respond to the research questions that seek to investigate the experiences and challenges of school leadership as well as provide new knowledge or added value for school leadership towards school quality improvement with the precise aspect of intervention focusing on instructional leadership. The topic is more precise on the content area of instructional leadership to respond to the evidence from chapter 2 which reveals that instructional leadership is a significant contributing factor to school quality improvement (Bush & Glover, 2003; Bush et al., 2013, Hallinger, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Hattie, 2009; Hattie, 2012; OECD, 2008; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Robbinson, 2003) and which also shows that challenges abound in the implementation of instructional school leadership. This topic is also crucial for this study and quality discourse as it is linked to the problem analysis discussed in chapter 1.1 which indicates what school leaders do to reflect on the implication their leadership style has on education quality. Conducting training of school principals on instructional leadership that tilts the attention of school leadership more towards

improving teaching quality and learning outcomes is projected to bring about positive influence in regard to the present practice of administrative school leadership. Such an intervention through capacity building is therefore an important feature in improving school leadership (Malakoluntha et al., 2014).

4.1 The objectives of the training

Today's education agenda is moving educational objectives from instructional to learning so as to aptly assess the development of competences in learners (Harden, 2002).

Based on the underlying problem analyzed in chapter 1.1 and the research questions in chapter 2.4, I am considering both learning output as also learning outcome as workshop objectives. Note that the outcome, as aquisition of competences, could only be verified through a long term approach.

Based on the underlying problem analyzed in chapter 1.1 and the research questions in chapter 2.4, I am considering both learning output and learning outcome to reflect workshop objectives (Trigwell & Prosser, 1991). Outcome which assures the acquisition of competences can could only be verified in the long term.

Dimension of outcome objectives

At the level of outcome, the school principals who are participants of the training workshop on one hand, develop instructional leadership competence and practice it in their professional life to enhance greater achievements of learners' outcomes and on the other hand develop and use functional action plans that reflect instructional

leadership in improving school quality. These outcome objectives guide the assessment of the training at the level of learning impact.

Dimension of the output objectives

Within the limits of the direct execution of the workshop, five output objectives are considered. First, principals gain basic knowledge of education quality, which is crucial for their professional life, second, gain basic understanding of the interconnectivity of the different quality dimensions (input, process, output, outcome) and the framework of educational quality (UNESCO 2004). Third, gain a theoretical understanding of different leadership styles, namely: administrative, transformational and instructional. Fourth, critically reflect on their leadership experiences and ideal leadership styles in relation to education quality and fifth, understand the paradigm shift from administrative to instructional leadership style as a measure to enhance learning outcomes. These output objectives are logically planned to ensure that school leaders reflect on their perceived ideas and experiences, learn new knowledge, compare their perceived ideas in the light of new evidence in the education discourse on quality and reflect on the change process.

The objectives as described above are therefore a reaction to the underlying problem of the inability of principals to reflect on the effect their leadership style has on learning outcomes as well as a response to the precise research questions established in chapter 2 which seeks to find out the experiences and challenges of principals in implementing instructional school leadership. By going through this process as guided by the output objectives, the decisional capital of school leaders is improved in the

direction of instructional leadership (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2014).

By taking into consideration both levels of objectives, that is, output and outcome objectives, I integrate the lens of philosophical foundations in the education quality agenda from the dimensions of considering both 'techne' and 'episteme' which fall in the ambits of 'paideia', an explicit normative concept of education (Alder, 1998; Durkheim, 1956). From this normative concept, the training objectives therefore go beyond the acquisition of facts or knowledge (techne) to include the development of competences (episteme) as reflected in the output and outcome objectives respectively. This emphasis is driven by the exigency that competence is the starting point of quality, thus backing the argument that what is most important is not whether a learner knows something but above all whether the learner can use the learnt knowledge to solve problems (UNESCO, 2004).

4.2 The didactical planning

The development and use of the didactic plan (cf. Appendix 1) for the training intervention articulated on both the elaboration of the training content and the training process itself, serving as an example of best practice for school principals in the direction of good quality school leadership and quality teaching. From the content point of view, the didactical planning considered that training on school leadership for the improvement of school quality requires first the deepening of understanding and added knowledge on educational quality and quality dimensions, learner outcome as main indicator for education quality (Hallinger, 2003; Lange, 2014) from where the influencing role of school leadership on school quality is developed

and reflected upon. The subject of school leadership is further analyzed under different leadership styles from where instructional leadership is discussed as having the most contributing role to learner achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Robinson, 2003). The content is broadened by examining the relationship between instructional leadership style and learner outcome and taking it further to fit in the existing school context under study in relation to the global agenda of quality education improvement (UNESCO, 2014).

Given that effective leadership means more than just knowing what to do but knowing how and why to do it (Waters et al., 2003), the experiences of principals and their challenges are taken into consideration in the didactical planning with facilitation exploring and making use of several methods as best practice to link the content with the training objectives, problem description (cf. chapter 1.1) and the research questions (cf. chapter 1.2). It is for this reason that the didactical planning in itself incorporated various aspects such as learning objectives, persons involved, content breakdown, methods on how to impart each content area, roles, material needed for each activity, person responsible, duration, assessment methods all put in a logical framework to show the facilitation flow and their inter-connectivity towards leadership quality improvement.

In this regard, during the training workshop, I as facilitator did not only focus on the content but more importantly on the implementation and experiences of the processes that are linked to both the topic and contributing factors of education quality from various perspectives that are presented below. First, transparency and open communication was exercised in the didactical planning with the involvement

of the co-facilitators and therefore there was a pre-meeting with the co-facilitators for them to understand the objectives and flow of the training workshop. Although the didactical planning carried outcome objectives as the most important to assure the acquisition of competence for quality impact creation, they were not expected to be fully attained within a very short time of intervention. Secondly, I did the main facilitation alone to ensure that content and facilitation style matched with the didactics of quality education but involved participants for the most part to take responsibility of their learning. This was enhanced through the use of methods like expert groups, think-pair-share, problem-solving, drawing of lots, expert group sharing, individual reflections and text analysis. In the same line of reasoning, I used power point presentation for shorter workshop duration especially for developing new knowledge but ensuring that most activities and teaching aid did not only transmit knowledge but also elicited thinking. These methods used, align with the strengthening of social competences and self-esteem thus enhancing school performance and ultimately educational quality (Krogull et al., 2014).

The argument for using these methods and approach in this training is to provide best practice on the teaching and experiential learning situation enhanced by instructional leadership for education quality improvement. Other aspects within the training process used were developing the understanding of educational quality and school leadership from empirical and theoretical frameworks, varying sitting arrangement for instance from semi-circular to group forms as well as changing group compositions thus demonstrating communicable and conducive learning environment, eliciting positive feedback, tolerance and respect of opinions.

I as facilitator also demonstrated focus on learning than on administrative issues by taking into consideration learning needs of participants, using very little time for administrative procedures and protocol during the training, but focused more on activities of deep reflections and change of perspectives and working from the experiences of the principals towards the improvement of learning outcomes. In my role as guide during the workshop, I was flexible and respected time (starting and ending time, and time for the different training slots). I also promoted individual reflections which are very important for school principals who in their daily work mostly function alone, thus developing and enhancing their decisional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

By supporting individual principals and carrying out exercises and activities of perception checking and assessment of understanding in a formative way, I ensured that all learners gained new knowledge and the understanding of how to organize and use this didactical approach in their daily work.

In the context of the time factor, I worked within the duration of one day I earlier planned. However, I realized that the deeper understanding for direct application necessitated field work. However, with the various levels and variety of methods used and the high participatory engagement of participants, this gave a good chance towards application.

4.3 The development of the training workshop

A lack of instructional leadership has been highlighted as a problem that leads to poor follow-up of teaching quality and absence of teacher motivation to implement teaching quality. These effects have a consequence of

low development of competences in learners and a poor school climate.

4.3.1 Intervention results in regards to competence development and attainment of objectives for the training workshop

In the following discussion, I will show how the intervention results lead to answering the research questions (cf. chapter 2.4) from three perspectives. First, in regard to individual acknowledgement of competences and experiences developed as individual exercise at the end of the training workshop. Second, from the training evaluation that links training objectives and the training process; and third from the general assessment of the training sessions through a mood barometer.

Perspective of intervention results in regard to individual acknowledgement of competences and experiences

The results in this section are made visible in tables 1, 2, 3 and 4. table 1 shows that the competences of principals from their experiences on instructional leadership vary greatly. When it comes to implementing major aspects that characterize instructional leadership and promoting quality teaching. The principals are not visibly involved in monitoring teaching and learning, meanwhile they make an effort to create good climate with teachers and students. In this aspect I observe that the principal-teacher relationship may tilt more on social wellbeing than on teacher professionalism. Thus regarding the question of the main focus of principals' activities, the observation is that only a few by their declaration focus on instructional issues. On the question of principal-teacher relationship, the professional towards teaching is limited. In regard

to steps to improve teaching quality, the practice is not visible and no principal has talked of teacher professional development.

Table 1: Personal acknowledgement by principals of using personal competences and experiences for good leadership

Personal competences and experiences for good leadership	Expression of competence (Number of respondents out of 9)
Carryout classroom visits	3
Spend more time of my leadership on teaching learning and learning process	1
Focus on student achievement	3
Maintain good school climate / good relationship with teachers and students	8
Check time management by teachers	4
Care about social welfare of teachers	6

Note: Table 1 is based on the task, “*I as a school leader, I know I do very well on I can use these personal competences and experiences for good leadership*” (cf. appendix 3) responded by 9 principals.

From the data in table 2, I observe that the principals declare the possession of a huge potential in implementing instructional leadership in the areas of classroom visits, more time spent on teaching and learning, focusing more on teaching quality and checking time management by teachers. The the potential of motivating teachers and students by principals is not reinforced. All of the above is

contributing to the research questions on the experiences of principals in implementing instructional leadership.

Table 2: Personal acknowledgement by principals of having the potential to use competences for good leadership

Competences for good leadership	Number of respondents out of 9
Carryout classroom visits	6
Spend more time of my leadership on teaching and learning process	7
Focus on more on teaching quality	8
Focus on more on student achievement	5
Maintain good school climate / good relationship with teachers and students	7
Check time management by teachers	8
Motivation of teachers and learners	1

Note: Table 2 is based on the task, “I as a school leader, here I have the potential I could use more... (competences for good leadership)” (cf. appendix 3) responded by 9 principals.

Table 3 displays that, principals wish to learn more on major aspects of educational quality such as teaching quality, monitoring tools for class observations, instructional leadership. Only a few have mentioned educational quality dimensions and how to do activities with students. An important aspect of being a role model as instructional leader is mentioned even though by one principal.

Table 4 shows the declaration by individual principals on the consequence of what would happen if leadership is not developed. It indicates their awareness of the importance of educational quality and instructional leadership.

Table 3: Personal declaration by principals of what to learn and exercise more on.

What to learn more on from the intervention	Number of respondents (out of 9)
Teaching quality	8
Monitoring tools for class observations	7
Training of teachers in quality teaching	7
Instructional leadership	7
Transformational leadership	1
How to do activities with students	4
Educational quality dimensions	3
Being a role model as instructional leader	1

Note: Table 3 is based on the task, “I as a school leader, this I would learn more and to exercise more” (cf. appendix 3) responded by 9 principals

Table 4. Personal identification by principals of what could happen if leadership is not developed

What could happen if leadership is not developed	Number of respondents (out of 9)
Ineffective learning	1
Learners' competences will not develop	4
There will be poor teaching quality	3
Drop in school reputation	2
Decrease in students' discipline	4

Note: Table 4 is based on the task, “If I as a school leader will not develop my leadership, this could happen” (cf. appendix 3) responded by 9 principals.

Perspective on the Intervention results from the framework of training objectives and the training process

This perspective takes into consideration the intervention results from the following dimensions; understanding of the content, ability to apply the theory, use of teaching methods, use of participants' ideas, engagement of participants and the working atmosphere. The data for this framework is got from the tool in appendix 4 and the didactical plan (cf. appendix 1). There are 9 respondents for results in tables, 5, 6 and 7. Data collected from using the tool in appendix 4 is broken into three tables, namely, table 5, table 6 and table 7.

Table 5: Comprehension of the training content and the ability of application

Dimension assessed ⇨	Understanding the content from the theoretical background		Ability to apply in the function as school principal	
	N° of respondents	% of respondents	N° of respondents	% of respondents
Very good	5	55.6	3	33.3
Good	4	44.4	5	55.6
Average	0	00.0	0	00.0
Should be better	0	00.0	1	11.1

The data in Table 5, show that all the principals participating in the training workshop understand the content as highlighted in the didactical plan (cf. Appendix 1). On the whole, the proportion that understands the theory is more than that with the ability to apply, also indicating that, the attainment of the output objective of the training focusing on gaining knowledge on aspects of educational quality,

leadership styles and paradigm shift from administrative to instructional leadership style is well attained. Meanwhile, the attainment of the outcome objective which articulates on developing instructional leadership competence and practicing it in their professional life (cf. Chapter 4.1) is not very visible. These results relate to the research question on the experiences of principals in implementing instructional leadership.

Table 6: Use of variety of teaching methods, use of participants' ideas and engagement of participants (participation).

Dimension assessed ⇔	Use of variety of teaching methods		use of participants' ideas		engagement of participants	
	N°. of responder	% of responders	N°. of respondents	% of respondents	N°. of respondent	% of respondents
Very highly	7	77.8	7	77.8	8	88.9
Highly	2	22.2	2	22.2	1	11.1
Less frequent	0	00.0	0	0	0	00.0
Negligible	0	00.0	0	0	0	00.0

Table 6 shows that the participants experienced and acknowledged the use of a variety of teaching methods (cf. appendix 1), great use of participants' ideas and the great engagement of participants.

Table 7 shows that the learning atmosphere of the training was largely relaxed.

The perspective of intervention results from the general assessment of the training sessions.

The mood barometers; one for the morning session and the other for the afternoon session were used for the general assessment.

Table 7: Working atmosphere

Dimension assessed ⇨	Use of variety of teaching methods	
Degree of comprehension ⇩	respondents	% of respondents
Very relaxed and friendly	8	88.9
Averagely relaxed and friendly	1	11.1
Less relaxed	0	00.0
Not relax	0	00.0

Table 8: Assessment of the content for the morning session of training workshop

Dimension	Number of respondents with very Good mood	Number of respondents with average mood	Number of respondents with bad mood	Content of the training workshop
Understanding of theory	9	0	0	Dimensions of educational quality, Framework for understanding educational quality. Leadership styles
Ability to apply the theory	9	0	0	

Table 9: Assessment of the content for the afternoon session

Dimension	Number of respondents with very Good mood	Number of respondents with average mood	Number of respondents with bad mood	Content of the training workshop
Understanding of theory	4	0	0	Paradigm shift from Administrative to instructional leadership,
Ability to apply the theory	4	0	0	

Tables 8 and 9 show the general feeling of the participants in respect to content mastery and ability to apply in their professional life. These tables indicate that the participants are highly confident on content mastery and have a high level of the possibilities to apply the knowledge learnt.

4.3.2 Summary of the results of the training workshop for principals on instructional leadership

Results linked to the individual perception of own competences

The results show that the perceived competences vary among the principals. Most principals have the high competences in enhancing a good school climate and social well fare and just with a very few having competences of lesson observations and enhancing learner achievement. Principals successfully develop action plans using a self-reflected exercise.

Results linked the attainment of learning objectives and the training process.

The results show that school principals have gained adequate theoretical understanding of educational quality

dimensions, leadership styles and the paradigm shift from administrative to instructional leadership style. From the process perspective, results show very high satisfaction in facilitation, use of various teaching methods, friendly working atmosphere, relevance and links to daily life; and high engagement of participants.

Results linked to the general assessment of the training workshop

Results indicate that the principals are highly satisfied with the workshop.

5

RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION

In this chapter on the results of evaluation, the data is first described (cf. chapter 5.1) followed by the results of the findings (cf. chapter 5.2). The three principals that constitute the sample are given anonymous names, PM1, PM2 and PM3. Their portraits have been described in chapter 3.2.4.

5.1 Data description

In this sub-chapter, the data description is structured under the categories of responses which align with qualitative content analysis. These categories have been obtained after coding. They are presented in the following order: first, Main activities of the principal; second, principal–teacher relationship; third, decision making; fourth, student learning perception; fifth, Leadership perception and sixth, professional development. In the description that follows, for each category, the findings from the three principals are presented.

Main activities of the Principal

PM1: The main activity of PM1 is ensuring that the administrative and teaching staffs execute their assigned tasks with feedback received from close collaborators at the end of each day especially about workers and how effective work has been executed. In this regard, PM1

expresses, “As soon as everybody is in school, the other thing is for me to ensure that people are at work and I have to do that with my very close collaborators. You have people like the vice principals, dean of study and the other master of discipline [...] heads of department (HODs) at the end of the day to be able to size up whether the day has been effective or not”. Sometimes ‘class visits’ are carried out as explained, “I move round sometimes from class to class to see how they are carrying on and at the end of these classes I may call the attention of the teachers and talk with them based on what I have observed.” From the description of ‘class visit’ by PM1, it does not mean the same thing as lesson observation in the strict sense of pedagogy that is based on the use of observation criteria and monitoring tools followed by discussion with the teacher observed so as to improve teaching (Cooper, 2014). The objective of such visits by PM1 mainly go to check the punctuality or presence of teachers in class. This is backed by this explanation of PM1, “[...] because you know, in a very big staff like this you must always have some people who are not always on time, so in case they are, I take note of that and try to find out what must have happened so that I should be able to know what steps to take”.

PM2: The main activity of PM2 is routine check on the wellbeing of students in the dormitories followed by administrative tasks. This is backed by the response, “[...] our interest more is on how the children fed during the night.” PM2 also follows up to ensure that teachers carry out their duty and then settles in the office to do general administrative tasks like responding to mails. PM2 therefore explains as follows, “You get back to the office now you try to supervise the teachers, to see that they are

on duty [...] after we go for morning devotion [...] we settle in the office now trying to dispatch anything that may be lying on the table. Basically, that is how our day looks like”.

PF3: The main activities of PF3 are focused on student and staff discipline, and office work. PF3 views the discipline of students as a huge demanding aspect which according to PF3 requires firmness of top-down approach. This is buttressed by the response of PF3 thus, “children of this generation are difficult to control, to be controlled. Sometimes when you give them assignments they do what they like, they don’t do it according to what you want...they will impose and if you are not hard, even when you are hard, some of them may still not want to do it”. For office work, PF3 finds it very pre-occupying and devotes a lot of attention to it and has summarily stated thus, “[...] so busy with papers to fill like from the ministry and so on”.

The results show that the activities within the framework of the leadership roles of the principals vary amongst the three interviewees but the general trend is that they mainly focus on administrative issues. PM1 makes an extra effort to ensure that time for different activities including teaching is respected.

Leadership perception

PM1: the leadership concerns are tilted to the interest of teachers, communicating their difficulties with the proprietor. PM1 explains, “I have the proprietor to work with, teachers also on the other hand, so I need to be in the position to channel the teachers’ problems to the proprietor and also to be able to talk with the proprietor about the problems the teachers have.” PM1 equally considers the integration of new knowledge acquired from

a training workshop in leadership by bringing teachers much closer. PM1 states, “ [...] but one of the things we have experimented and it works very well has been that on instructional leadership. You can remember during our last seminar...that has helped us too very much. That you are in close touch with teachers. You don't deal with them at a distance [...] they feel free to express themselves [...] in that way they are more relaxed and they work better.” However, the use of ‘instructional leadership’ by PM1 is limited to the attribute of maintaining a good working climate and does not stress on enforcing teaching quality and thus improving student achievement which is the main goal of instructional leadership from empirical and theoretical backgrounds (Bush et al., 2013).

PM2: With PM2, leadership focuses on collaboration with the close collaborators, here vice principal, discipline masters and school prefects ensuring that the goal and mission statement of the school is attained. In this regard, PM2 responds thus, “we work in collaboration with the vice principals and the discipline masters and the school prefects, then we, the mission statement is there and our role is to see that it is carried out, it is realized”. The mission statement as presented by PM2 highlights the training of students intellectually and morally to equip them for their future lives, the practice is mainly focused on the moral aspect following the response, “our mission statement is to train young people to fit anywhere in the society in future, people of good moral standing, intellectually sound and morally sound [...] we do a lot of counseling [...] where they go wrong, we also try to correct them.”

PF3: Leadership perception by PF3 is a combined team work of the close collaborators with whom activities are

planned and executed. PF3 express, “I cooperate with my team, the administration. I have the vice principal [...] discipline masters [...] bursar and secretary and a chaplain. So together we sit, see how we are going to do... so it is a cooperate activity.”

Summary results on leadership perception

I observe from the data on perception of leadership by the three interviewees that the leadership style practiced by the three of them is largely dominated by working on policies and routine activities and very limited focus on the teaching process, learning circumstances and achievement. From this background, it can be summarized that the leadership style is largely administrative. However, in some instances for all the three principals, the participatory involvement of close collaborators in decision making and concerns for the wellbeing of students and teachers gives some elements of transformational character in their leadership. A few ideas on instructional leadership are purely inadequate and theoretical.

Within the leadership framework of the three principals, PM1, PM2 and PF3, I observe that decision making is the combined responsibility of the entire administrative staff. PM1 in addition delegates powers especially to the vice principal as well as involves the entire staff in the decision taking exercise. PM1 finds the use of feedback important when power is delegated. The following response of PM1 gives a clearer evidence, “... I get my closest collaborators; we sit together, look at the mission statement of the school and then sit together, talk about it and see how best it can be implemented. [...] teachers, sometimes we make sure that they are also involved in decision making especially in departmental meetings and staff meetings.”

Principal-teacher relationship

PM1. Maintains cordial relationship with teachers but ensures that deviant attitude is corrected as well as encouraging good work as responded thus, “if it means you know; giving them some corrections, I do that and if it means giving them some encouragement, I do that”. According to PM1, the Vice Principal equally works closely with teachers to follow-up for effective execution of tasks as elaborated in the following response, “the vice principal, dean of studies [...] go around and to check on what the teachers are doing, to see how effective teaching – learning process is going on and to see if the syllabuses are closely followed [...] they can give me feedback so that we can know the best way forward”. The meaning of ‘check for effective teaching – learning process’ as used by PM1 is limited to a casual check of the presence of teachers and learners in class than on the monitoring and coaching of teachers on teaching quality criteria that guarantees meaningful learning (UNESCO, 2004)

PM2: Has a cordial relationship with teachers but checks to ensure that the syllabuses are well interpreted as presented in the following response, “I try to find out from them about syllabus coverage, teachers’ regularity, the needs in the various departments, teachers who need assistance.” PM2 is disturbed by the reluctance of some teachers to change but continue to encourage teachers to implement competency-based approach. In the aforementioned direction, PM2 responds as follows, “Some who have been there for long and they think that there is nothing new, some too are generally slow to change with the changing times [...]. Well, we like this competence-based approach that has come. In trying to professionalize

teaching, relating what they are teaching to real life [...] so many seminars that are organized by the pedagogic service, the delegation, we do as much as we can to let them attend, then also in our staff meeting.”

PF3: Has a cordial relationship with teachers but is disturbed and finds no real solution when a teacher’s level of education is low and expresses the step taken thus, “Well, God is our helper. I can pray and dialogue”. From the expression of PF3, there is no evidence of having any concrete idea of overcoming poor quality of teacher performance.

Summary results on principal-teacher relationship

The results on principal – teacher relationship show progressive narrowing of the gap between the principal and the teacher especially in issues related to decision taking, working climate, delegation of functions and social concern. There is however very limited professional relationship in the area of quality teaching. The principal in some cases identify the acquisition of new knowledge in instructional leadership as responsible for bringing them closer to the teachers.

A little difference comes from PM1 demonstrates the theoretical importance of class visit to improve the teaching-learning quality but however limits its practice to casual glance at what is taking place in school to check mainly for the effective presence of teachers and students, thus misleading for the concept of ‘class visit’. PM1 also acknowledges that the training workshop on instructional school leadership has helped in bringing PM1 closer to teachers which is an aspect of recognizing the importance of new knowledge. PM1 registers the discussion of

improving the situation of teachers with the proprietor and indicates poor salary of teachers as a challenge which is reflected further from a wider systemic level of the non-payment of subsidies to private schools by the state. This shows that PM1 reflects on the important role of teachers from within the school level to a systemic level. On the other hand, PM2 and PF3 completely shelve issues of teaching and learning to their administrative collaborators whose practical approach is purely administrative. However, PM2 shows the support for capacity building of teachers in the direction of competency-based learning but PF3 does not show any evidence in relation to staff development even when PF3 is faced with the situation of low performing teachers. While PM1 works towards education for all with the concern of the future at heart, though not evident from the leadership practice, PM2 and PF3 do not express any agenda concerning the student learning.

Student learning perception

PM1: PM1 believes and works in the direction of educating as many students as possible no matter their social, cultural and economic background as is expressed in this response: “this intention has been to educate as many Cameroonians as possible and indiscriminately too. When I talk about indiscriminately [...] so people who are educated here are from various backgrounds”. PM1 also finds it important to educate children in a way that prepares them for the future but choses to focus more on students of the final year for the purpose of good results at end of course examinations expressed in the response: “ we have to strategize and see what to do to help students succeed in their end of course examinations”. From the response of PM1, the perception of preparing students for

their future is limited to end of course examinations, thus PM1 is examination-oriented and is mostly concerned with the examination classes. There is no evidence to ensure adequate building of competences in learners necessary for life.

PM2: For educational matters, PM2 feels that it is more the responsibility of the vice principal and dean of studies who should mainly check the coverage of syllabuses. In other matters about students' life in school, the discipline masters carry the responsibility of checking punctuality and the respect of school rules and regulations. The response of PM2 in this regard is as follows: "The vice principals are generally in charge of the academic life of the college [...] I try to find out from them about syllabus coverage, teachers' regularity [...] discipline masters who are really concerned with the children's life, find out from them if the children are regular to class, if they are punctual, they obey the school rules and regulations." The perception of students' learning by PM2 is the pre-occupation of the vice principal who is concerned more about administrative routines on the teaching program. There is no evidence that a concrete framework focused on teaching and learning is put in place. PM2 however in isolated cases make follow-up of the academic performance of some students. In spite of the fact that PM2 teaches some classes, contact with a majority of students is not a pre-occupation. In connection to this, PM2 states, "students most of the time I meet them on corridors and once in a while, I just chat with them". The priority of PM2 for students concerns their meals and dormitory conditions but, on the contrary, acknowledges that the mission statement of the school is centered on molding children for a better future.

PF3: PF3 indicates that the learning situation of the students is the concern of the vice principal who does this by drawing the timetable, checking the record of work and registering students for end of course examinations. PF3 elaborates the relationship with students in this response; “The vice principal [...] is in charge of academics, so if there is anything wrong, like the timetable, classes not taught, we talk about it [...] Yes the vice principal checks into the record of work book and sees how much work is covered per subject.” PF3 identifies interaction with students by watching them carryout co-curricular activities or receiving them in the principal’s office to attain as expressed in this response, “some of them are going to work on the school farm, and when they are working, you come and stand and you see what they are doing... Students may come, sometimes they come with one problem or the other if the discipline master is not there [...] I may have to judge a case between one student and the other and so on”. From this background of responses, the interaction of PF3 and students is very passive and limited to issues of discipline. The administrative collaborators of PF3 focus more on administrative issues. The perception of students’ learning by PF3 is not pre-occupying.

Summary results on student learning perception

Concerning the student learning perception, I observe that the three principals do not show evidence of being in direct touch with the learning of students. In all the cases, the principals allow all matters concerning student learning to the vice principals. The vice principals on their part are more focused on routine matters such as drawing the timetable, checking absences and running examinations. There is the general absence of monitoring

student learning. Student learning perception cannot be dissociated from the perception of teaching. In all the three cases, the follow-up of teaching to ensure effective learning is absent as the principal-teacher relationship is mainly centered on the respect for schedules and other administrative imperatives.

Professional development

PM1: On professional development, PM1 presents the benefits of the principal getting close to teachers as an added value from a training workshop.

PM3: The greatest wish of PM3 is to see that all teachers take part in seminars organized on the theme of competency-based learning.

PF3: “[...] labor court assessor. So I am also learning in that aspect [...]; and even how taxes are handled, because these are matters concerning the school”. The interest of PF3 is therefore connected to building the capacity in administrative matters not directly linked to teaching and students’ learning.

Summary Results on professional development

Professional development of the principal or teaching staff is not explicitly indicated by any of the three principals. PM1, PM2 and PF3. However, PM1 and PM2 express the benefits of professional development of principal and teachers respectively on subjects related to quality leadership and competences of learners respectively. Although PM1 and PM2 do not explicitly express their focus on quality teaching improvement, they both implicitly show support to the professional development of staff, meanwhile, the priorities of PF3 are more directed to non-

teaching, non-learning and non-educational leadership dimensions. PF3 explicitly indicates the difficulties non-training in school leadership poses to the effectiveness of the leadership role of the principal.

Challenges

PM1. The challenges of PM1 are three-fold. First, the difficulty of managing a large staff size, as reflected in the response, “you know in a very large staff, here we have more than 100 teachers [...] there are some who will not take to instructions [...] such people are a real headache [...]” Second, the poor salary of teachers is a challenge to PM1. This challenge of poor salaries is expressed in this response, “sometimes the teachers may feel that what is given them is not enough, some of them may be disgruntled because they feel that what they are receiving is not up to what they put in.” Third, PM1 is very worried by the fact that government is not subsidizing private education, in spite of the enormous financial sacrifices in educating students. This is reflected in the response, “One of the problems has to do with government not subsidizing the school [...] I think especially with the lay private school like this [...] it is sacrificing enormously as you can see for yourself [...] it bothers me and sometimes I ask myself whether the government really appreciates what the lay private institutions are doing [...] to really educate Cameroonians.”

PM2 has two main challenges. The first and major challenge being the limited financial resources. According to PM2, if the financial means were there, the welfare of students and the working conditions of teachers could be improved. This background is elaborated in the following response of PM2, “challenge of the means at your disposal”. PM2

continuous “Priority areas will be the students’ welfare, especially the dormitory, their meals improved upon and even the working conditions of teachers”. By stating ‘means at your disposal’, PM2 actually mean, ‘the financial resources at my disposal’. Another challenge as expressed by PM2 is how to deal with old teachers on the staff who according to him are no longer productive as he explains, “at times, there are teachers who are already old on the staff and they think that they have reached the apex and it is difficult to make them change.”

PF3 identifies three major challenges. First, the challenge of lack of understanding by teachers. Second having to learn the function of being a principal on the job and third; the challenge of dealing with students’ discipline. PF3 puts all these challenges in the following response, “some of the teachers are not understanding, may not be understanding when you are expressing [...]; as a new principal, [...] I have to learn by myself and I have to learn many things at a time because I will not stop to learn before I come back and implement. [...] with the children, when they ring the bell [...], they waste time.”

Summary results on challenges faced by principals in implementing instructional leadership.

The management of teacher heterogeneity in terms of levels of education and the limited professional training for principals are the major concerns. I observe that a proper understanding of the dimensions of education quality, the understanding of quality teaching as the most influencing factor on teaching quality and the practical equipment and use of monitoring tools on teaching quality constitute the major challenge. There is limited financial resources to serve as incentives for teachers coupled with the near

absent of government's financial subsidization to private schools.

5.2 Summary of results

The summary of results in this sub-chapter are presented under two main sections, first on experiences of school principals and second on challenges of school principals.

Results within the framework of the experiences of school principals

The results reveal our aspects. First, that the main activity of school principals is the routine administrative tasks with little focus on the student-learning process. Second, the leadership practice and perception is purely administrative with some elements of transformational leadership style and with limited aspects of instructional leadership that are mostly theoretical. Third, concerning the student learning perception, principals do not show evidence of being in direct contact with the students in regard to their learning. The principals allow all matters concerning student learning to the vice principals who themselves are mainly carryout administrative tasks. There is the general absence of monitoring student learning and teaching quality. Fourth, the principal-teacher relationship is cordial and mainly limited at the level of social wellbeing. In decision making, the teachers are involved. There is little awareness or steps taken to improve the teaching quality of the teacher and limited professional development agenda for teachers.

Challenges

The challenges principals face are differentiated into three parts. First, the management of teacher heterogeneity in terms of levels of education and the limited professional

training for principals are the major concerns. Second, the principals do not have the strategy and tools to monitor teaching. Third, there is limited financial resources to serve as incentives for teachers coupled with the near absent of financial subsidization by government to private schools. To sum up the results, principals have limited understanding and use of instructional leadership.

6

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPING QUALITY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

In this chapter, I am going to discuss the contribution of my intervention and the results of its evaluation which are respectively presented in chapters 4 and 5 in relation to the theoretical background (cf. chapter 2). The slant of my discussion is embedding my findings to the scientific discourse on educational quality and taking into consideration the problem analysis underlying the study (cf. chapter 1). From this background, I will discuss my findings in the context of the scientific discourse on educational quality in four aspects. First, effectiveness and limitations of training principals in instructional school leadership (6.1). Second, Lack of awareness for quality development (6.2). Third, absence of monitoring (6.3). Fourth, risk factor of the non-payment of subsidies by the government (6.4). and fifth, summary (6.5).

6.1 Effectiveness and limitations of the training of principals

The results of this research show that the training of principals in instructional school leadership is effective to the acquisition of skills and knowledge but lacks follow-up of the application of acquired knowledge. While the results from the intervention show that principals understand the theoretical framework of instructional leadership and have developed the potential of implementing it (cf. chapter 4.3.1), the evaluation results show that the implementation of instructional leadership is still insufficient (cf. chapter 5.2). As this was not a long term project, the stages for monitoring and early use were not provided. From theoretical background, training for conceptual change as is the case of the training of principals in instructional leadership cannot be completely achieved by an automatic elimination of old habits and their replacement by new conceptions nor just by introducing new ideas (Ruhf, 2003). Therefore, the procedure to bring change in human behavior requires that the change agents themselves are equipped with change leadership skills (Lewis & Grosser, 2012). From this background, the empirical results of this study are discussed in the light of conceptual change processes in professional development.

6.2 Lack of awareness for quality development

The lack of awareness for quality educational development is an indication of a system with limited administrative and organizational structure in developing innovative management (Verspoor, 1989). The impact of the leadership role in this perspective becomes more visible in schools where the learning needs of students are most acute (Leithwood et al., 2004) as is the case of schools

in this study. This therefore means that the problem has roots at the systemic level where there are inadequate guidelines and limited policies on school leadership.

The fundamental issue settles in increasing awareness in educational quality development as a threshold for enhancing instructional leadership. This means that the systemic dimension of quality leadership development needs to respond to the prevailing challenges and should address the role the state, district, education providers and the institution play in formulating, developing and enhancing policies that ensure school leadership development as well as reflect on the motivation and incentives that are required to spur principals to work towards student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). It is argued that the involvement of the whole system in quality development, significantly improves student achievement (Fullan, 2010). In concrete terms, a systemic approach that puts in place a functional structure for in-service teacher training especially in developing countries breaks the silence of the lack of awareness in quality development (Verspoor, 1989; Lange, 2014).

6.3 Absence of monitoring

The quality of a system therefore drops if the leader is not part of the quality improvement agenda. Given that school leaders are responsible shaping the schoolprofile, they require system monitoring (Fullan, 2010). In the study at hand, findings on monitoring are focused on the principal, but the follow-up concern should also seek to know which supervisory body monitors the principal. This therefore implies that effective monitoring only takes place if all levels in the system are monitored and if all are involved in professional development to this effect. This requires

investing in professional development for the purpose of having professional capital in the system (Margreaves & Fullan, 2013). To monitor quality in education, there is need for proper understanding of the quality criteria and the indicators to take into consideration. This therefore means that leaders at all levels of education must be familiar of teaching quality (Gauthier & Dembélé, 2004, Scheerens, 2004). As a pre-requisite basis for understanding teaching quality, the school leaders need the understanding and use of learner-centred approach (Krogull et al., 2014). Therefore, the training of school leaders in monitoring, should include the criteria of teaching quality, explore the beliefs and experiences of principals to ensure appropriate instructional leadership for quality school improvement (OECD, 2009). From this reflection, the central issue is putting in place an approach that enhances participation and activation of both teachers and students. Therefore, the school leaders and stakeholders themselves need activation and participatory in approach, to be able to do proper monitoring for teaching and learning. Proper monitoring assures constructive feedback and effective communication on teaching and learning; which is an important attribute of instructional leadership acclaimed as very effective in improving teaching and learning outcomes (Blasé et al., 1999).

6.4 Risk factor of non-payment of subsidies by the government

The evaluation results of this study show that the motivation of teachers to commit themselves in quality teaching is low due to limited financial incentives largely caused by the non-payment of subsidies to private education by the government (cf. Chapter 5.2). This challenge discourages

the principal in the endeavor to cause teachers to put extra effort towards quality teaching.

In the context of this risk factor of the non-payment of subsidies by government to private schools, the moral, social, physical and cognitive stability of teachers is precarious for ensuring quality teaching. From this reflection, the post-2015 education goals whose guiding principle is that no one is left behind, requires that countries especially those of Sub-Saharan Africa take up their responsibility to finance without bias, education for all children studying in the respective countries (UNESCO, 2014). This act of economic and social responsibility needs to be extended from the primary school sector to secondary schools (Lange, 2014).

6.5 Summary

The effectiveness of instructional leadership to enhance quality education in schools especially in sub-Saharan Africa has possibilities of succeeding provided that there is continuous quality professional development at all system levels. This will facilitate the effective implementation and monitoring of quality teaching and learning outcome.

7

CONCLUSION

This is the final chapter of the study at hand in which I will present the implications of the findings. I will start by giving the answer to the research questions, the implication for practice and the implication for further research.

7.1 Answer to the research question

Based on the findings of the study at hand, I now answer to the overall main research question stated as follow: *What are the experiences of school principals in implementing instructional leadership?*

The implementation of instructional school leadership is viewed from different dimensions in regard to the sub-questions. I will give answers to the sub-research questions and then conclude with the summary that reflects the answer to the main question.

Concerning the first sub-question (*What are the main activities of principals?*), the principals in the study carryout several management tasks. The main activities of principals articulate around administrative routines, ensuring that policy issues are respected. Very little focus goes to enhancing and monitoring teaching and learning. However, there is a little integration of transformational leadership through social concerns for teachers and students and

participatory approach in decision taking. Therefore, the main activity of principals is on administrative issues.

Regarding the second sub-question (*What is the nature of the relationship between the principal and the teacher?*), this is limited for the most part to administrative imperatives and social expectations. The Principals are hardly in contact with the teacher as far as the business of teaching is concerned. The feedback of what the teacher does during the teaching process checked by the collaborators of principals who focus more on the verification of punctuality and presence than on the constructive exchange and feedback on teaching and learning. There is no agenda of teacher professional development.

Concerning the third sub-question on *what is the perception of school principals on student learning*, the principals do not show evidence of being in direct touch with the learning of students. In matters concerning student learning, principals hand over the responsibility to the vice principals. There is the general absence of monitoring student learning.

About the practical steps the principal takes to improve teaching quality, no real steps are taken. The understanding of teaching quality is limited as principals take casual classroom checks on attendance and punctuality for monitoring. There is little awareness on quality development.

The answer to the question related to *the challenges of principals in implementing instructional school leadership*, is in three dimensions: first, the management of teacher heterogeneity in terms of levels of education and the limited professional training for principals are the major

concerns; second, the principals do not have strategies and tools to monitor teaching; third, there is limited financial resources to serve as incentives for teachers coupled with the near absent financial subsidization by government to private schools. Furthermore, the main challenges comprise of limited professional expertise in instructional leadership resulting in poor monitoring of teaching and learning and limited support from the government in matters professional development and subsidies. In conclusion, Principals of private schools in the study at hand have inadequate understanding and implementation of instructional leadership.

7.2 Implications for practice

From the findings of this study, I provide below the suggestions for a practical and effective implementation of instructional leadership especially within the framework of educational quality for countries with low levels of attaining educational quality standards:

Develop the policy and guidelines for professional quality development of school leaders.

The development of such policies and guidelines should be done by professionals on educational quality. Such school leadership frameworks can help provide guidance critical attributes, tasks and responsibilities of quality school leaders with the goal of attaining better learning outcomes. The guidelines should be instituted as the basis for recruitment, training and evaluation of school principals. The policy on guidelines should allow for the contextualization at the level of the school, region, multi-cultural and national system levels and explicitly giving room for meaningful decentralization.

Set up a functional in-service training program

To guarantee a continuous professional development in leadership, setting up a functional in-service training program is crucial. Such a program should cater for the training, coaching and monitoring of school's principals, teachers and stakeholders in education. The training sessions should have been regular with long durations and characterized by practical sessions in schools. This together with the integration of process factors by trainers will ensure an effective conceptual change. The training content should cover instructional leadership, teaching quality, monitoring, learner-centred approach and other key aspects of educational quality. During such training that should bring in added knowledge, the quality dimensions should be reflected from both the individual school and systemic levels as well as taking it to the global picture. Newly recruited principals through such a service should be given the necessary training before they commence work.

Share of best practices amongst principals

Given that some principals already have initial skills in this direction of instructional school leadership, it is necessary to share best practices through school visits and other exchange programs. Best practice can also be shared with existing successful in-service programs.

Government should put quality at its development agenda

By focusing on professional quality development, support educational strives of both privately owned and government run schools, the government will ensure that teachers are

motivated, and that effective teaching and learning are taking place. This will help to stabilize and retain quality teachers. To assure better learner outcomes, governments should revise the curriculum to make it more activating, learner-oriented and linked to real life expectations.

Set up a professional committee to select principals

The selection of principals should be done by a committee that understands the instructional quality needs of the schools and the qualified candidates should be those that meet the led down requirements.

7.3 Implications for further research

The following suggestions for further research apply more to developing countries with low levels of educational quality.

The perspectives of the supervisory authorities of school principals on the leadership role in educational quality.

This investigation seeks to find out how the theoretical, practical and monitoring dimensions of quality leadership are viewed by the supervisory authorities of school principals.

Investigate the effect e of multi-cultural and multi-administrative dimensions of an educational system on the instructional leadership role of school principals.

This is crucial in countries where the language of instruction is not the mother tongue as well as in countries with varied administrative systems of education.

Investigate the influence of systemic factors on the instructional leadership role of school principals

Such an investigation can indicate which system level is more influencing on the principals' leadership role. The ultimate goal is to develop professional quality at all system levels.

The effect of societal expectation on school leadership.

Given that principals are responsible to take care of the staff and learning needs of students on one part; and also work in perspective of their employers, education stakeholders, parents and the community on the other part, an investigation of their expectations can be necessary to link them with instructional leadership imperatives.

Principals play a vital role in setting the direction for successful schools, but existing knowledge on the best ways to prepare and develop highly qualified candidates is sparse (Varner, 2007, p. 31).

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Didactical plan

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
Organization Welcome / Official opening	Horse race game / Peer introduction Address presentation Ice Breaker puzzle: individual reflection/ plenary discussion (to move out of the box) Search and trace the missing perfect star	Written address Graphic with missing star	CF1, CF2, CF3 RDSE MF	HG 8 P 5 IR 3 PLD 4	9.20
1. Introduction to Education quality					
1.2 Quality definition	Individual reflection / Plenary discussion What is quality?	Activity card Bold markers	MF	IR 5 PLD 13	9.45

Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
Dimensions of education (quality as input, processes, output and outcome)	Input presentation by ppp Dimensions of education (quality as input, processes, output and outcome)	ppp		IP –ppp 7	
1.2 Framework for understanding educational quality	Station work / Text analysis Description of the influencing factors of quality viz learner character, contextual factors, enabling inputs, school process (teaching, learning) and how they are connected to outcomes. (Each station with a given dimension) Station visit / Cooperative learning	Text (on factors influencing quality) Work sheets Bold markers Flip Charts	MF	STW/TA 20 STV 25	10.30
Break				10	10.40

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
1.3 How is learning outcome (Competences) a determinant of educational quality?	Think-pair-share Why is learning outcome (competences) considered the determining factor for education quality? Plenary Discussion	ppp	MF	TPS (10, 10, 10) PLD 15	11.25
2. leadership types					
Individual reflection on leadership style of former school head teacher (H/T)	Individual critical reflection on the following: ○ Think of a H/T who affected your life as student or teacher positively. How? ○ Think of a H/T who affected your life as student or teacher negatively. How?	Writing sheets	MF	IR 15	12 05

Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
	Key word visualization (on chart same subject filled by all participants – without discussing)	Bold markers Card boards		KWV 10	
	Sharing in plenary (without mentioning names of H/T and by participants who are willing to share).			SPL 10	
Own leadership perception by change of perspective	Individual reflection ○ How do you think is the way your students perceive your leadership style? (No sharing)	Individual note book	MF	IR 5	
2.1 Critical attributes of Administrative, Transformational and Instructional leadership ideal types	Cooperative text description ○ Critical attributes of administrative, transformational and instructional leadership types with examples.	Literature on the different ideal types of leadership	MF	CTD 20	12.50

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
	Drawing of lots Cooperative grouping by balloting. Study the text provided and write the distinguishing characteristics of the ideal leadership type highlighted Expert group sharing			DL/ EGS 25	
Lunch break /				50	13.40
Evaluation of the morning session	Individual ticking	'Mood barometer' form, bold			
2.2 Paradigm shift in the role of school principal as administrative leader to his/her role as instructional leader for quality improvement	Role play Administrative and instructional leadership types Individual reflection on role play followed by plenary discussion			RP 25 IR/PD 10	15.10

Impact of the Leadership Styles of Principals on School Quality

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
	Individual reflection followed by snowball group discussion / plenary discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relating each ideal leadership type to learning outcomes ○ Role of the principal as instructional leader for better attainment of learning outcome 	PPP		IR 10 SBG 20 PD 10	
	Expert group interview Discuss the emphasis of enhancing instructional leadership			EGI 15	
	Input presentation Enhancing instructional leadership (key points)	PPP	MF	IP – PPP 5	
Break				10	15.20
Summing up the workshop					

What	How	Material	Who	How long (in Minutes)	Total time
Summary: School Leadership linked to quality	Presentation by ppp Summing entire workshop content	ppp	NF	ppp 10	15.40
Take home message	Individual work Write down take home message	Reflection forms	TAB	IW 10	
Evaluation and Closing					
	Individual General evaluation of afternoon session.	'Mood Barometer' form and bold markers	WE	10	16.30
	Individual work Filling evaluation forms	Evaluation forms	NF	IR 20	
	General remarks by participants				
Appreciation	Presentation of Pleasantries		ESR – PCC. CBC	P 5	
Closing remarks	Presentation		DDSE	P 10	
End					

Legend:

C: Carousel; CF: Co-facilitator; CTD: Cooperative text description; DDSE: Divisional Delegate of Secondary Education; DL: Drawing of

lots; EGI: Expert Group Interview; EGS: Expert group sharing; KVV: Key word visualization; HG: Horse game; IP: Input; IR: Individual reflection; IW: Individual work; MF: Main Facilitator; NWR: North West Region; P: Presentation; Pu: Puzzle; PD: Plenary discussion; PPP: Power Point Presentation; R: Repetition; RDSE: Regional Delegate of Secondary Education; RP: Role play; SBG: Snowball grouping; STW: Station work; STV: Station visit; SPL: Sharing in plenary; TA: Text analysis; TL: Time line; TPS: Think-pair-share.

Appendix II: Interview questions

1. I will like to learn from your experiences as a principal of a secondary school. Tell me about your everyday work in school.
2. You are in charge of leadership in your school, how do you do this? (or what steps do you take?)
3. As a principal, I am sure you face challenges. What are the challenges you face, if any?
4. Is there anything else you would like me to know about your work as school principal?
5. How would you describe school leadership?

Appendix III:

Individual take home message form (after the intervention)

Myself as a school leader.....	
I know I do very well on I can use these personal competences and experiences for good leadership	Here I have a potential I could use more
This I would like to learn more and to exercise more	This could happen if I will not develop my leadership

Appendix IV: Training evaluation Form

Training workshop for principals of non-government secondary schools on the theme, “Instructional leadership for educational quality improvement”.

Code

First two letters of your place of birth		
First two letters of your mother’s name		

Please tick against the appropriate options in aspects where alternatives are provided. In each case, fill the space captioned ‘remark’ with a suitable comment or example(s) to make your choice clearer.

A. Content and assimilation related issues

					Remark or comments
1.Organization	Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
2. Relevance to my work as school principal or links to daily life	<input type="checkbox"/> Very relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant to a certain extent	<input type="checkbox"/> less relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant	
3. Time management	Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
4. My understanding of the theory of the workshop subject	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	

					Remark or comments
5. My ability to relate the theory to the practical school situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	

B. About the Facilitator / Facilitation

					Remark or comments
6. Facilitation skills	Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
7. Use of a variety of methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
8. Competence in topic	Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
9. Level of engaging participants/ use of participants' ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Very highly	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly	<input type="checkbox"/> less frequent	<input type="checkbox"/> No engagement	
10. Level of preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> Very highly	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	

C. About Participants / Participation

					Remark or comments
11. My expectations	Very highly met	<input type="checkbox"/> met	<input type="checkbox"/> met to a lesser extent	<input type="checkbox"/> not met	
12. Participation	participatory most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> Participatory some of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> participatory in few occasions	<input type="checkbox"/> not participatory	
13. Working atmosphere	Very relaxed and friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Averagely relaxed/ friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> less relaxed/ friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Not relaxed/ friendly	

D. Logistics and related circumstances

					Remark or comments
14. Seminar room and arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
15. Materials: Use and availability	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
16. Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	

E. Summing up

					Remark or comments
17. All together for me personally, the training was ...	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Should be better	
18. The effect (learning of new ideas) for me personally was	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Could be more	<input type="checkbox"/> very small	

F. Any suggestions

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ABSTRACT

Research shows that school leadership is one of the factors that determine the quality of school, thus influencing learners' outcomes. As sub-Saharan Africa is one of the sub-regions of the world facing vast challenges in terms of access and quality education, the leadership style of school principals plays a more influential role. This study examines the experiences of secular, non-governmental high school principals in the North West Region of Cameroon with respect to their leadership styles. The study describes in great details a workshop for principals on educational school leadership. It further investigates principals' understanding and experiences with leadership. The results show that the implementation of pedagogical leadership is inadequate as school leaders' experiences are characterized by administrative routines that are not focused on the quality of teaching and the results for the learners. There is an opportunity to develop the skills of school principals for the implementation of pedagogical leadership.

Abstrait

Les recherches montrent que la direction de l'école est l'un des facteurs qui déterminent la qualité de l'école, influençant ainsi les résultats des apprenants. L'Afrique subsaharienne étant l'une des sous-régions du monde confrontée à de vastes défis en termes d'accès et d'éducation de qualité, le style de leadership des directeurs d'école joue un rôle plus influent. Cette étude examine les expériences des directeurs d'écoles secondaires laïques et non gouvernementales de la région du Nord-Ouest du Cameroun en ce qui concerne leurs styles de leadership. Il décrit en détail un atelier pour les chefs de établissement

des écoles. Il étudie en outre la compréhension et les expériences des directeurs avec leadership. Les résultats montrent que la mise en œuvre du leadership pédagogique est inadéquate car les expériences des chefs d'établissement sont caractérisées par des routines administratives qui ne sont pas axées sur la qualité de l'enseignement ni sur les résultats pour les apprenants. Il existe une opportunité de développer les compétences des directeurs d'école pour la mise en œuvre du leadership pédagogique.

Frederick Fondzenyuy Njobati holds a master degree in educational quality (MA) obtained at the University of Bamberg. Prior to this, he had had two trainings in educational development. First, an in-service teacher education in learner-centred and active pedagogy assisted by the German Development Service (DED) and the German Protestant Association for Development (EZE). In the second place, he underwent professional development in Israel on innovative methods for an integrated approach in teacher training with support from UNESCO. He is currently the Coordinator of the Pedagogic In-Service Training Programme, ISTP Cameroon of Protestant Churches (PCC and CBC) in cooperation with Bread for the World as well as a doctoral researcher and coordinator of the International Master Programme in Educational Quality (IMPEQ) at the Chair of Foundations in Education, University of Bamberg. His research and policy interests focus on peace education and leadership for peace and development in conflict and post-conflict regions.